



# BHAGAVAD-GITA

WITH TRANSLATION AND NOTES

BY

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Sub Judge Tanjore

VOL. I

CHAPTERS 1—6

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## FOREWORD

MY aim in bringing out this Volume of translation and notes in regard to the blessed Bhagavad Gita is a humble one. I know that the Gita has been translated into all the civilised tongues and that the name of the Bhashyas and commentaries on the Gita is legion. The points of controversy among the expounders of the Gita seem to be many and the clash and din of their battle are terrifying and depressing. But on close scrutiny an irreducible minimum of doctrinal difference is found to be infinitesimal and the points of identity and unity and harmony are found to be innumerable. One of the duties of modern India is the maximisation of points of agreement and the minimisation of points of difference amongst the various interpretations of modern Hinduism. This endeavour will not only bring out concord instead of discord but will give us the only true and lasting basis of communal unity but will enable us to achieve that integration of spiritual doctrine which was the greatest gift of Sri Krishna to distracted humanity. In my published work *The Bhagavad Gita The true path to God* and in my forthcoming work *The Problems of the Gita* (Ganesh & Co.) I have tried to do the above rational and spiritual duty by

the method of narration and by the method of exposition. In this volume and in the succeeding volumes I have tried to do the same work by the method of exegesis and interpretation. I desire also to publish my translation of the Gita separately and to bring out a very brief volume of notes in which the re-integration of doctrine can be shown in a compendious form which will strike the eye and appeal to the heart of even the busy casual educated reader of to-day. I offer my work to Sri Krishna as a *Jnana Yajna* because in the eighteenth chapter of the Gita He has stated that He is pleased with such a sacrificial mentality. The Gita begins with the word *Dharma* and closes with the words *Sri*, *Vyaya*, *Bhuti*, and *Ati*. Its study and the strenuous application of its teachings to life are the only and supreme God-given means towards the achievement of sure and splendid national prosperity and victory and ascendancy and righteousness. If this volume helps my brethren in the direction of transforming distracted and despairing India into a united and triumphant India, I shall deem such a result as the greatest reward and the greatest blessing.

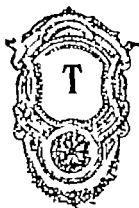
TANJORE

4th November 1927

} K. S. Ramaswami Sastri.

# THE BHAGAVAD GITA

## INTRODUCTION



THE *Bhagavad Gita* has long been recognised and loved and worshipped as one of the greatest scriptures of the World. My attempt in the succeeding pages will be to enter into the

spirit of the Lord's teaching with the help of the great Acharyas but without surrendering my individuality and independence of judgment. The peculiar features of my effort will be to show the harmony among the paths of Karma, Bhakti, and Jnana and to state the elements of harmony among the three great schools of thought that have sought to interpret the Gita, to prove how many of the alleged differences among them are unreal, to state what are the irreducible elements of difference among them and to show at the same time in what comprehensive scheme of thought even such

differences fall into their proper places and by what method we can attain to a full and unitive vision of the highest Hindu thought as embodied in the golden declarations by Incarnate Godhead in the Gita. The three schools of thought are like the eyes and the mind which form a trinity that must work together to have a full vision of things. I know that the task that I set before myself is both difficult and liable to misconstruction at the hands of devoted followers of each of the three schools. But the attempt to get at the truth of things is the privilege and duty of man and I shall make it with due sense of the greatness of the leaders of thought who have expounded the Gita till now and of my own personal limitations.

Dharma is Eternal. To modern ears this seems an outrageous statement. But let us examine the time-myth for a moment. The division of time into ages, centuries, decades, years, months, weeks, days, hours, minutes, and seconds is merely a creation of the mind, just as we draw imaginary longitudes and latitudes over the surface of the globe for purposes of easy communication of ideas about the locations of things. The stream of time is eternal, it is beginningless and endless. Dharma is the eternal system of laws governing

the Universe There is no inherent illogicality in saying that it is eternal It is like the enveloping atmosphere in the bosom of which the flux of things goes on At the moment of the manifestation of the world it also becomes manifest like the fundamental existence of space which is necessary for the rhythmic dances of the stars and suns It is in right relations to all ages or rather to each age as we imagine it to arrive

The soul of man is eternal and hence the laws governing the activities of the embodied soul must be eternal also The fact that in particular human groups there was not sufficient general purity and individual illumination to attain to a vision of such laws through Divine grace does not disprove the existence of such laws or the possibility of the revelation of such laws duly given and duly transmitted in specific human groups and through the agency of specially inspired men

If the soul of man is not different from the body the senses and the mind, it will be nothing astonishing to say that the laws governing it must be in a state of flux just as the body the senses and the mind constituting the universe of phenomena are in a state of ceaseless flux and change But if the soul is separate from them and is eternal



happiness and bliss in its essence, it is clear that the laws in regard to it must also partake of the same eternal character. Hence such acts and omissions as affect the embodied soul's future must be governed by eternal laws and cannot be subject to mutations of time and place or the variations of human desires which belong to the region of the mind.

Hence it is that Dharma is said to be *Ateendriya* i.e. not verifiable by the senses. It is akin to the soul and to God in this respect. It is like them also in that it is intensely realisable. Dharma is the bridge leading to immortality अमृतस्यैव सेतुः । It is the auspicious means of realising God-union. If the soul and God are not verifiable by the senses, it does not seem unreasonable to say that the means of passage from soul to God should be unverifiable by the senses or by the worldly and impure mind. Tread the path itself and the identity of the sign-posts can be easily recognised.

Indeed Dharma is like the surrounding sheath of air which is as necessary as the pervasive warmth of the central sun of God for life. While अग्रात् is derived from a root meaning "to go" and hence implies a ceaseless continuum of change, we

must remember that *यश्च* is derived from a root meaning to sustain

While the West cries 'Follow Reason' India says 'Follow Dharma and accept Reason when it is in harmony with Dharma and in furtherance of Dharma'. It is an illusion to suppose that in respect of cultural and spiritual matters progression of time means attainment of a higher altitude of realisation. Mr J. M. Kennedy says: 'But even those among us who do not profess to be very ardent students of the classics will be the first to admit that we have not developed in a cultural or philosophical sense beyond where the ancient Greeks left off. We have it is true made great strides in purley material things but in spiritual affairs we are little wiser than Plato, Heraclitus and Pythagoras.' Indeed if the Western intellect is not shocked by the view that the ethical code proclaimed in the Sermon on the Mount is not outworn there is no inherent unacceptability in our notions about Dharma.

In fact the Hindu conception of Dharma is not really out of harmony with the essential elements of the modern spirit. The modern spirit is summed up in the words—Liberty, Equality and

Fraternity As regards Liberty, the greatest of Hindu books on Dharma says

सर्वं परवश दुःखं सर्वमात्मवश सुखम् *Manu*

(All dependence on others is misery, all self-dependence bliss.

In this country Dharma ruled the Kings who ruled the people, bad kings were turned out when they were bent on destroying Dharma; the people were consulted when the heir-apparent was chosen and at other important moments of the national life; there was the combination of a strong central authority and local self-government and village autonomy; there was no mere verbal worship of democracy as a fetish in combination with the pulling of the political strings by abusive and self-seeking cliques such as we find in the West, but a stable social and political order based on an admirable combination of the elements of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy all under the sovereignty of Dharma, there was no clash of majority and minority or of minorities *inter se*, but there was an organisation of society on a basis of co-ordinated and non-competitive social service based on a spiritual conception of life which placed duties before rights, and there was the utmost intellectual freedom Mr Havell says in his Ancient and

Mediæval Architecture of India It is true that Indo-Aryan liberty was not of the crude Western type represented by the formula 'Liberté Egalité, Fraternité' It was liberty for every man, whether king or peasant to follow his own Dharma—the Dharma being that which long tradition and the wisest of Aryan law givers who knew Indian history and people had taught every man to regard as his duty to God to state his household and himself' He says again 'The Aryan was a born aristocrat but his ideal of Government was essentially democratic. The philosophy of the Vedas proclaimed the highest ideal of self government and Aryan philosophy was not an abstract speculative theory but a practical formula of life The democratic principle of government was fully understood in ancient India' The combination of aristocratic ideals in personal relations with democratic ideals in governmental and spiritual relations produced a unique efficient and harmonious social polity in the golden age of Indian civilisation

So far as *equality* is concerned our civilisation has recognised the inherent and spiritual equality of all to the fullest extent, nay it proclaims the *unity of life* But there is a difference between

shutting our eyes to the patent inequalities of mental and physical life and indulging in day-dreams of equality of mental and physical life, or bringing about such equality at the base of the guillotines established to murder those who happen to have got the good things and graces of life in a more abundant measure and recognising such inequalities and trying to effect equality by filling up the gaps and breaches with the ambrosia of love and of the recognition of divine immanence and manifestation. The latter is our method and the former is the Western method.

So far as *fraternity* is concerned, we have recognised this principle fully as following from the fatherhood and motherhood of God. But we have realised what the West has forgotten viz., that the conception of fraternity implies elder and younger brothers and that the reverences of life should be maintained for the uplift of all. Truth was held to be accessible to all, and all were equally eligible for salvation, and no real difference was made between man and man. Mr Havell very rightly speaks of "the spirit of Aryan philosophy which proclaimed truth to be a temple open on all sides to devout worshippers who might choose the approach most accessible to them."

Thus in the West society is sought to be made stable or rather kept on the brink of unstable equilibrium by checks and counter-checks here it is held together by the central gravitational force of Dharma. There law and fear of the enemy perform the functions of love of God and love of Dharma which are operative in India. There society consists of conflicting groups held together by fear of enemies and by obedience to law here we have interrelated groups held together by love of God and loyalty to Dharma. There religion is not in vital union with life but here in the words of Mr Havell "religion is never regarded as external to secular life but as its consecration and illumination."

In our land religion philosophy and ethics are commingled are one. This is as it ought to be as human nature is a unity and not a mere juxtaposition of unrelated elements. The assertion that such commingling is a mark of barbarism and that their separation is a test of civilisation is baseless. The thinker is yet to be born who is bold enough to deny refinement and civilisation to the Indian people.

The Hindu conception of the state is of a stable and harmonised social order—able to resist disruptive forces within and attacks from without.

which has as its instrument of political life a harmonious combination of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy as represented by the king, the council of the elders, and the council of the people. The will of the people was always consulted and respected and any dangerous predominance of any one of the elements of political power was prevented by their common allegiance to the sovereignty of Dharma. In modern times the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people has been raised to the rank of a fetish. Democracy run mad is a de-vitalising and dangerous force in societies. There are provinces of life where the will of the people is everything and there are other provinces of life where the will of kings, of aristocracies and of democracies must bow before a Higher will which declares to us the eternal principles of righteousness. Where the will of the people nay, even the will of the majority which is a less stable and unworthy manifestation of human reason is allowed to subvert the racial ideals of the people and the moral order as revealed to it, then it becomes a foe to real progress and culture and is one of the arch-enemies of God.

I have thus dwelt at length on the Hindu conception of *Dharma* as that is the basic truth on

which rest the golden doctrines of the *Gita* about the attainment of beatitude. We have to rise from the unregulated activity of *Āsma* or desire which in conjunction with intellect leads us to depths far below the level of the brutes. From *Āsma* to *Dharmāśraddha Kāma*, (desire unopposed to Dharma) from the latter to *Nishkāma* (desireless) *Āsma* from the latter to *Dhyāna* and *Jnana* and from them to *Moksha*—such is the golden ladder of the spiritual life.

For the attainment of this *Śraddha* (faith) is necessary. *Śraddhā* is the माता (mother) who will show to us our Divine Father. Who but the mother can show us our father.

भक्त्यायुष्यान्वयं सध्यात्मा विनश्यति ।

नाय सोकोऽस्ति न परो न मुक्त संसारात्मना ॥ (*Gita II 41*)

This divine virtue of *Śraddhā* will eventually lead to the attainment of *abhyāsa* and *vairāgya* and eventually to the raptures of God love and God knowledge and to the final attainment of union with God.

स्वाध्याययोगसप्त्या परमात्मा प्रकाशते ।

(By the acquisition of scriptural knowledge and Yoga the Supreme Soul becomes radiant in our souls)



I shall now deal with a few questions raised at the outset by many inquiring modern minds. The first of these is, whether Sri Krishna is God. In regard to this matter we must at the beginning proceed on faith and await the bliss of realising His divinity as a fact of consciousness. Concurrent and uniform testimony of holy people for ages vouched for the truth of the fact that concentration of mind and purity of heart can help us to achieve the vision of Godhead. If we can accept such testimony in mundane matters we are doing that every day we may without violation of our logical faculty do the same in spiritual matters. The declarations of the Gita and of holy sages, when taken on trust and acted up to with sincerity and devotion, will become self-evident and blissful facts of consciousness. When the mind is made calm and serene by purity and dispassion and devotion, the glory of God will shine there as the full moon shines reflected on the bright surface of a tranquil lake. The divinity of Sri Krishna is a truth and has been proclaimed even in the Upanishads. The Gopala Purva Tapani Upanishad describes Him thus

सत्पुण्डरीकनयन मेघाभं वैद्युता वरम् ।

द्विभुज ज्ञानमुद्राढ्य वनमालिनमीश्वरम् ॥

(The Isvara whose eyes are like the beautiful lotus who is of the hue of the cloud whose dress is like the lightning who has two arms and who shines with the symbol of wisdom and who bears the garland of flowers known as Vanamala)

The Lord's divinity is supported by the clearest and most credible and unequivocal testimony by the words of the holy and perfected men of all ages, of those who had not the two defects of incompleteness of knowledge and absence of disinterestedness. The inner realisation of the divinity of the Lord will come after we become worthy of it by service and love and wisdom अहं जन्ममर्त्ये ज्ञानयागमां प्रपद्यते —says the Lord in the Gita —(VI, 19)

The next question raised is whether the words of the *Gita* are Sri Krishna's own words or not? There is nothing inherently absurd in the view that Sri Krishna actually spoke the words of the *Gita* on the battlefield. Even in the case of human beings utterance becomes rhythmical under the stress of emotion. The metre of the *Gita* is so simple that until very recently there were scholars who could discourse in it offhand on the most abstruse subjects. Is it wonderful that the Lord discoursed in the *anushup* metre to Arjuna on the problems of life and death and the means to the

attainment of immortality? There is however an orthodox school of interpreters that thinks that Vyasa has given the discourse of the Lord in words as near the Lord's words as possible, preserving most faithfully the spirit of the Lord's teachings. Vyasa was according to us an incarnation of the Lord व्यासाय विष्णुरूपाय says a well-known verse. The Lord says in Chapter X of the Gita मुनीनामप्यहं व्यास. Hence even in this view there is no limitation set on the value of the *Gita*.

Again, some people say that the path to salvation as stated in the *Gita* is easy and others say that it is difficult. The path described in the *Gita* should be trod with the utmost care, discrimination, and loyalty. In fact, it is simply trying to set the current back and carry the stream to its source. It requires immense energy and concentration of will to stem the river of desire and to undo all that we have done in the past. The easiness of the path lies in the possibility of our having access to the central fountain of power and wisdom, in our identification of ourselves with the Lord, or rather in our complete surrender of our too aggressive limited self unto Him in a passion of love.

Some ask, is the ethical system of the *Gita* practical? Arjuna felt it to be so in the face of one

of the most trying situations in life and said

महा माह् एवमिति तस्या त्वाम्बुजादाम्बुजाद्भुत ।

स्विनाडन्वि गतगदेह कश्चिदे बभूव तव ॥

(Gita VI 111 ~3)

What better proof can there be to show that the ethical system of the Gita is eminently practical and is not a mere matter of speculation unrelated to life

Some others ask does the Gita point as the goal *Arma yoga Bhakti yoga* or *Jnana* ? A great deal of bewildering and acrimonious controversy has grown about this discussion. Let us take the three verses

सन्वासाः कर्मयोगस्य निःश्वसत्कृतप्रभो ।

तयोस्तु कर्मयोगोऽथवा कर्मयोगो विधिप्यत ॥

तद्विद्वद्भ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिन्याऽपि सतोऽधिकः ।

कर्मिभ्यधाधिको योगी तन्मायोगी भवतु न ।

न हि ज्ञानेन मुक्त्य पवित्रमिह विद्यते ॥

(Gita V 2 11 16, 1, 38)

Each seems to praise one of the paths as the highest. But the Lord's synthesis is to be gathered from a few verses to which sufficient prominence has not been given and which give us a clue to His real teaching which can be best summed up by saying that the golden ladder of the higher life is to rise

from unregulated desire to a state of regulated desire, thence to a state of action in a spirit of detachment and renunciation of fruits to the Lord, thence to limitless devotion and meditation in which the mind is laid at His lotus feet in a passion of limitless and ceaseless adoration and becomes full of illumination as to the truth of things and attains to cosmic consciousness, and thence to the eternal rapture of God-realisation. I am giving the verses in a sequence of my own to bring out my meaning fully and forcibly

यत्साह्यै प्राप्यते स्थानं तद्योगैरपि गम्यते ।

कर्मणैव संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः ॥

संन्यासस्तु महाबाहो दुःखमाप्नुमथो गतः ।

योगयुक्तो मुनिर्ब्रह्म न चिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देशमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते ।

सर्वलग्नमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमचलं भुवम् ॥

संनियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः ।

ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।

अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखे देहवद्भिरवाप्यते ॥

(Gita, V, 5, 6, XII, 3, 4, 5)

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्पराः ।

अनन्येनैव हि योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥

तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारकारणात् ।

अस्मि न विराट्पार्थ मन्वादेशितचेतसाम् ॥ (XII, 6-7)

अक्षिता मद्रवप्राया बोधयन्त परस्परम् ।

कथयन्तश्च मां निख्यं दुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥

तथा संततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।

इदामि बुद्धेर्बोग ते येन मामुपचान्ति ते ॥

तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानज तमः ।

नास्तयाम्बात्मभावस्यो हानदीपेन भासता ॥ (X 9-11)

उदारा सर्वे एषैते हानी स्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।

बाह्यदेव सधर्मिणि स महारामा धृदुर्लभ ॥

बहूनां जन्मनामन्त ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते । (VII, 18, 19)

I shall develop these ideas later on but what I wish to emphasise here is that the Gita gives us a synthetic vision of life in which these means of uplift wait us at fixed stages and lead us eventually to the attainment of the bliss of Moksha. I shall refer here to two stanzas in the Bhagavata that bear on this point.

असंयुमिर्द्विजयेष्टा वसन्तमविभा गताः ।

अनुष्ठेयस्य धर्मस्य ससिद्धिर्हरितोपगमम् ॥

बाह्यदेवे भगवति भाक्तिबोगः प्रबोजितः ।

अनयप्राप्तुं विराग्यं ज्ञानं च यद्वैशुक्लम् ॥

(The fluctuation of well-performed Dharma as prescribed according to Varnas and asramas is propitiation of Hari Bhakti Yoga in relation to Bhagavan Vasudeva causes soon the self-birth of dispassion and wisdom )

The real fact is that there are some persons who while pursuing the path of karma attain to the bliss of enlightenment *as a result of devotion and knowledge* in past births and in the present birth and yet continue to do action having regard to their station in life. Even in their case liberation presupposes love and realisation of God which alone can give salvation तत्कुर्वन् मदर्पणम्—How is this possible without knowing and loving Him? There are others whose *vāsanas* take them from the completed life of action into the life of devotion where the mind is so central in the love of the Lord that the appointed time for doing *karmas* passes often without their being aware of even the passing of time. There are yet others whose *vāsanas* take them from the completed life of action into the life of meditation and of inquiry as to the verities of life and whose mind is so centred in this task as to be oblivious of the march of time. These souls must necessarily be few and are the very salt of the earth. If others unfit for such tasks take up such tasks

they merely mislead the world and ruin themselves.  
The Lord says

कर्मोद्भियाणि सयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन् ।

इन्द्रियाणान्निभूषारमा विध्याचारः स उच्यते ॥

(Gita III, 6)

I have seen no discussion more futile than this. Each of these paths being purity itself and the Lord being the Eternal Pure One can we not trust it to lead us to Him somehow directly or indirectly? The only test is the attainment of God-realisation (आत्मदर्शन). Each soul must attain to the state of Infinite Love and Wisdom to attain to such आत्मदर्शन. The measure of action which the Lord lays upon it for the sake of *सर्वेषाम्* (the guidance of the world) is determined by the time and place and environment of the birth and existence of the body. What has this accident to do with the bliss of God-realisation which is the common factor of all real liberation? It is the privilege and duty of every one to work up to this Mount Kailasa in the Himalaya of higher life, whatever be the particular path by which he climbs up to that dazzling and dizzy height. Every one must realise that only knowledge which exists as enjoyment or bliss—the bliss of *Sacchidananda* or the bliss of supreme love—that can give



the truest liberation. The bondage of the trammels of matter which enmesh us by reason of innumerable attachments formed in innumerable births must go. Such attachments being the result of ignorance, the effects will not disappear unless the cause disappears. Hence knowledge is the one condition of true and effective and eternal liberation. This knowledge is not mere intellectual assent but realisation. We can easily see that it can never be really distinct from love. If in respect of the higher among the transient phenomena of the world knowledge and love go together, they are necessarily one in the case of the highest, the noumenon. They are like the light and the warmth of the sun,

inseparable and one. A life of selfless action combined with devotion and meditation is the one means of attaining to this stage. There may be some who had gone through this stage in previous births or in a portion of this life-time. To them as pointed out already the measure of action is determined by their station in life and it is done only for लोकसंग्रह. When shall our empty discussions about the superiority of one path or another cease and when shall we resolutely, never halting, never resting, tread the path that leads unto Him आदित्य-  
वर्गं तमसः परस्तात् ? (Who shines like the sun beyond the confines of darkness)

Another question asked is, whether the teachings of the Lord in the Gita are suitable to all ages? The nectar of salvation will confer immortality not on men of one age or one land alone but on all. Arjuna stood before the Lord as the typical man (मर) and has been the means of enlightenment of the whole universe for all time.

सर्वोपनिषदा गात्रो योग्या गापालनम्यन ।

वायो वास सुधोर्मोका दुग्ध गीतामृतं मदत् ॥

I may refer here also to a beautiful verse in the *Bhagavadgita* which says —

एव हि साकानीं शिब पश्चात् सनातन ।

यं पूर्वं जानुसवत्सु यत्प्रमाणं जनादन ॥

It is again asked why did the Lord impart his gracious teachings on the battlefield and with restrictions imposed by the difficulties of the time and place chosen for the imparting of the instruction (*Upadesa*)? But all that is required for the imparting of instruction is प्रसङ्गावश्यक, भीमावश्यक, and वयनावश्यक (suitableness of opportunity of the pupil and of the teacher). This combination was perfect in the present case. The propriety of the Lord's choosing the battlefield as the scene of his discourse is obvious. The travail of Arjuna's soul made his enlightenment and uplift absolutely neces-

sary. Of course Sri Krishna could have by his divine will compelled Arjuna to fight. But it would have been an act of cruel kindness to Arjuna. The *Bhagavata* describes the compassion and love of a real teacher thus

ब्रूयुः क्षिप्रं हि शिष्यस्य गुरवो युत्समप्युत ।

Other inquirers ask, why does the Gita begin with metaphysics and not with the problems of conduct directly? The first reason is that Arjuna's special inner difficulty arose by reason of his erroneous notions about the nature of the soul. His *Soka* (grief) was due to *Moha* (illusion) about the nature of the soul and about the nature of duty. Secondly, to solve a problem of conduct a right idea of duty is necessary. Dharma (duty) is not rightly understood with wrong conceptions about the soul, about God, and about the true aim of life which is the attainment of union with God. Therefore the Lord goes to the root of things at the very outset of the discourse. The body and the soul are not identical—that is the basic statement on which the fair fabric of God-ward leading truths is raised. *Moksha* is स्वरूपप्राप्ति (self-realisation). The recovery of our true nature alone can give us permanent happiness, for, all things acquired must go away. The scripture is शपक and not कारक. It reminds u

of true and divine nature and does not ask us to acquire as salvation something which is outside of ourselves. It shows to us the glorious ornament about our neck (माला) which we did not see and which we regarded as lost and which brings us joy and elation when discovered to be with us. It is the acquitting by the higher court of God realisation the soul that was held in bondage by the lower court of desire. Such release from bondage is not the acquisition of a new element of joy but the attainment of our own bright freedom and joy.

The teachings of the Gita are in perfect harmony with the teachings contained in all the other portions of the Mahabharata. The view that the Gita is an interpolation in the epic is thus absurd. The interpolation theory is always trotted out when a man wants to condemn a thing or to make out a show of scholarship or to undermine the faith of others. I may refer here to the closing verses of the *Bharata* which show how there is perfect harmony between the teachings of the Gita and those of Mahabharata generally.

मातापितृसहस्राणि पुत्रदारशतानि च ।

संसारेष्वनुभूतानि तथा यास्यन्ति चापर ॥

इष्टस्थानसहस्राणि भवस्थानशतानि च ।

दिवसे दिवसे भूढमाविशन्ति न पण्डितम् ॥

ऊर्ध्वग्राहुर्विरोम्येष न च कश्चिन्वृणोति मे ।

धर्मादर्थश्च कामश्च स किमर्थं न सेव्यते ॥

न जातु कामान्न भयान्न लोभात्

धर्मं त्यजेज्जीवितस्यापि हेतो ।

नित्यो धर्मः सुखदुःखे त्वनित्ये

जीवो नित्यो हेतुरस्य त्वनित्यः ॥

This wonderful work, is absolutely perfect even from the point of view of poetic beauty and merit. Its predominant emotion is भक्ति (devotion) and it leads all from the plane of worldliness up the golden ladder of *Niskhama karma*, *Bhakti* and *Jnana* to Eternal Bliss. Its symmetry and loveliness are as remarkable as its purity and holiness. It has also been classed with, and described as, an *Upanishad*, a *Sastra* and *Brahmavidya*, (भगवद्गीतासु उपनिषद्ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे). The word "Gita" imports only भगवद्गीता though there are innumerable Gitas now existing, mostly written with it as their model and giving to us its great teachings in other forms. The *Gita* is in perfect harmony with the *srutis* and *smritis*. It harmonises all aspects of life, shows the concord between theism and monism, reveals to us the proper place of *karma*, *bhakti* and *jnana*, con-

vera to us the quintessence of all truth and fits us for the attainment of God love and God realisation

I do not go here into the question of the new *Gita* given to the world by the Shuddha Dharma Mandalam because it has no credentials and is opposed to the testimony of all our teachers and saints and because such a discussion will unduly swell the size of this introduction. Nor do I propose to go into the question of the date of the *Gita* because there is no use in discussing all the contradictory dates now assigned and such an attempt is sure to make this introduction longer than it should be. No valid reasons have been shown to reject the traditional date and we should hence accept it as correct. I have dealt with these questions in another volume.

Sri Sankaracharya prefaces his holy *Udharaya* to the *Gita* by saying that the Lord had taught the *Pracurita marga* and the *Avartita marga* and that as the Dharma consisting of these two paths became less potent and widespread owing to the energy of *adharma* consequent on lessening discrimination and unselfishness which themselves were caused by selfishness and desire the Lord incarnated as Sri Krishna to establish Dharma and preserve the brahminhood of the Brahmins because if these were taught to tread the right path they would see

to the Dharma being observed by others This incarnation of the Lord was due to His infinite Love and Compassion He taught the two aspects of Dharma to Arjuna to enable him to reach the shore beyond the sea of grief and illusion and chose Arjuna as the recipient of his gracious doctrine and message because what a great man learns and does in the world will be followed by all Sri Sankara says further that the holy goal of the Gita is the highest bliss which is consequent on outsoaring the cycle of *samsara* and which is attained by *nishkama karma*, *bhakti* and *jnana* अभ्युदयार्थोऽपि यः प्रवृत्तिलक्षणो घर्मो वर्णाश्रमाश्चोद्दिश्य विहितः स देवादिस्थानप्राप्तिहेतुरपि सन्नीश्वरार्पणबुद्ध्याऽनुष्ठीयमानः सत्त्वशुद्धये भवति फलाभिसंधिवर्जितः । शुद्ध-सत्त्वस्य च ज्ञाननिष्ठायोग्यताप्राप्तिद्वारेण ज्ञानोत्पत्तिहेतुत्वेन च निःश्रेयस-हेतुत्वमपि प्रतिपद्यते ।

Sri Ramanuja prefaces his holy *bhashya* by saying that the Supreme Lord who is beyond all worlds and thoughts incarnates in the various worlds to enable the souls to look up to His lotus feet and attain the fruit of life and incarnated as Sri Krishna to show His Infinite beauty and grace to the world of men, the ostensible object being to remove the sorrows of the earth (भूभार) and taught, for showing to all the means of true salvation, by Bhaktiyoga with *jnana* and *karma* as *angas*, under

the guise of inducing Arjuna to do his duty पाण्डु  
तनयमुद्धमोत्साहनभ्यामेन परमपुरुषोऽयमुद्यममाशुषाधनतया वदान्तादित  
स्वनिर्गम्य ज्ञानकमानुशृङ्खित मक्तियोगमवतारयामास ।

Sri Madhvacharya prefaces his holy bhashya  
by saying that Vyasa an incarnation of the Lord  
composed the Bharata to convey the Vedic truths to  
all and that the Gita is the essence of the Bharata  
तस्य च सर्वभारतायामप्रदो बाभ्रुदेवाऽनुनस्रवादाभ्यां भारतपारिभाषितमपु  
मूर्तां गीतामुपनिषत् ५ ।

*I do not think that it is necessary to deal *in  
extenso* with the ideas of others as these are only  
amplifications of the above views. We can well  
realise how all of the above views are noble and  
true and enable us to have a free access into the  
heaven of Sri Krishna's gracious message*

Nilakanta says well —

भारते सर्ववेदार्थो भारतायथ कृतस्तथा ।

गीतायामस्ति तेनैव सर्वशास्त्रमयी मता ॥

It is usual in our books to state in regard to  
each work the subject matter the inter relatedness  
of means and end the fit aspirant, and the goal  
(विषय, उपाय अधिकारि and फल) The nature of the  
eternal verities of life is the subject matter of  
this eternal and eternally glorious work. The



inter-relation of means and end in it is the clear exposition of the *Sadhana*s (means) that lead to God-love, God-attainment, God-realisation, and God-union. The fit aspirant is he who like Arjuna is face to face with the clear and clarion call of Duty in the battlefields of life and who throws himself at the feet of the Lord for enlightenment and uplift. The goal of the work is *Moksha* or the attainment of the perfect and eternal liberation. We must hence approach the study of this holy work with a due sense of the greatness of the theme, the means, and the goal.

Thus we can well sum up the introduction thus. At the beginning of each Kalpa, energies of the universe which had been withdrawn into Him begin to have self-expression. They unfold themselves according to an infinite plan present to the mind of the Lord. Just as at the commencement of the evolution of the energies by the will of the Lord begins the universal cycle (*Kalpa*), so also has the Lord's message of salvation to human souls been given for their guidance at the beginning of the cycle itself. This is the real significance of the Hindu theory of the origin and meaning of the scriptures. Such message of purification and salvation is the Veda. The Veda

teaches the *Praritti Marga* and the *Viritti Marga*. The former if followed properly and in a spirit of dispassion and detachment and devotion will lead to the latter and through it to God. The Gita teaches us this truth again and again, and modern commentators who do not recognise this and make action the final goal of life are people who have no real vision as to the real teachings of the Gita. They think that Sri Sankara has suppressed action altogether. This view of theirs is due to a phenomenal error. A beautiful Sanskrit verse says

न कर्माणि लब्धेवोगी कर्मभिस्त्वज्यते ह्यसौ ।

Sri Sankaracharya says

असकरो ह्यसकं यद्रूपमावगती सखा सकलतन्मयाहनि कृत  
कृत्यता च ।

Hence according to him it is only he that has attained the beatitude of God realisation that is free from the life of action for the simple reason that he who is immersed in the nectar of God realisation cannot act any more than a man in a state of deep sleep can not. But a disciplined life of selfless action and love is the only means to that end and if any one gives up the means and pretends to have reached that end he is easily found out and great is his fall. There is all the

difference in the world between the man who gives up a life of action and the man whom the life of action gives up as being too high for its sphere. In regard to such pure and liberated souls, who are we, wallowing in the mire of selfishness and sin, to lay down the special paths which they should pursue? This does not mean that any one can take up life dedicated to devotion and contemplation irrespective of his or her birth, station in life, and fitness. Each person's Dharma is determined by his birth which itself is determined by previous *Karmas*. But the attainment of liberation may be due to the consummation of devotion and self-knowledge in the course of previous births or in this birth, and is irrespective of the particular social status or function of the individual. His actual work in the world of phenomena is determined by his birth and station in life. In the case of those who have attained to the highest raptures of God-love, God-vision, and cosmic consciousness, we can realise that the preliminary stage of *Nishkama Karma* and *Chitta Suddhi* alone could have led to such a glorious and heavenly consummation. Such rare and sweet liberated souls will compel our adoration by the very perfection that shines in them and makes even their bodies a temple of purity and holiness.

I have stated in my work on *Sri Subindranath Tagore* about this matter thus 'Our sages declare that every man must begin his spiritual progress by service of humanity that the attainment of illumination by renunciation knowledge, and love is an end in itself and that even after illumination the wise man should do his duties in a spirit of detachment and dispassion so that others might not be led astray by the wise men giving up the performance of duties They declare further that in the case of the very few who have risen to the highest raptures of love and wisdom and are immersed in bliss no worldly action can be expected What action do the votaries of the gospel of work ask them to do? If they pass through a place they spread a paradise of love about them, and whoever is fortunate enough to breathe for a moment in the divine and luminous atmosphere that they carry about them feels a sudden conversion of the heart. A compassionate glance from their eyes is worth a thousand religious lectures. How few how very few, can be such souls? In the case of those who are only travellers on the path towards light, the performance of duties is exacted by the sacred law, though they will do their duties in a spirit of detachment and dispassion and as an act of worship of the Lord saying and

feeling *Sri Krishnarpanamastu* (श्रीकृष्णार्पणमस्तु) I dedicate it to Sri Krishna Through law the soul rises to wisdom and love and through wisdom and love it rises to the Bliss of the Lord "

Mr Tilak in his *Gita Rahasya* says that he bases his doctrine that *Karmayoga* is the final goal of life according to the Gita on the verse which tells us what are the means of finding out the highest essence of a work

उपक्रमोपसहारावभ्यासोऽपूर्वता फलम् ।

अर्थवादोपपत्ती च लिङ्ग तात्पर्यनिर्णये ॥

(The beginning, the end, the matter repeated, the original elements, the goal, the accessory matters dealt with and the elements of logical discussion are the seven means of ascertaining the purport of a work )

No one can have any quarrel with this method It is in his application of it and in the inferences drawn by him from such application that the erroneous elements have come in It is true that the Gita is addressed to a warrior and that it finally overcomes his disinclination to action Is that a reason for saying that every one should do action irrespective of his *Varna*, *âśrama*, *saddhâ* or *Vâsanas*? It is no doubt true that it is the *Upani-*

*I d* of the Mahabharata which describes the *D'harma*. But does not the Mahabharata describe both *Irraritti Dharma*s and *Vicriti Dharma*s and do not the heroes of the *Mahabharata* finally turn their back upon the over enjoyed pleasures of life and attain to the highest altitudes of renunciation? The test of *alhyāna* also has been unfairly applied by Mr Tilak. Even supposing that the Lord again and again reverts to Arjuna's duty to fight how does that injunction apply to all irrespective of time and place and circumstance and environment? If the *apurenta* test is to be literally applied it will be the duty of every man to *fight* because the Lord did not tell Arjuna to administer the law or to relieve suffering or to lead people in the paths of righteousness but to fight. Again the Verse

मधोपनिषदा गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दन ।

पायो वसु सुचीर्भोजा दुग्धं गीतामृतं मदन् ॥

shows to us that the Gita is a scripture given to all and not to the fighter alone. Further the injunctions to attain to the summits of devotion and contemplation are not really less frequent than the injunction to fight. The test of *कर्म* also has not been properly applied by Mr Tilak. The fruit is the attainment of God and not doing the work of fighting.

मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः सगर्वितः ।

निर्वैर सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ॥

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मा नमस्कुरु ।

मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।

अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुच ॥

It is not possible to take up the other tests for full consideration here. The test of अपूर्वता also cannot bear the strain sought to be put upon it by Mr Tilak. The Lord says that he is giving to the world what He had declared to the world at the beginning of creation and which it had forgotten. The really valuable element in the Gita is its grand synthesis. Mr. Tilak's view that in those pre-printing days no one said or wrote anything unless he had something original to say is to say the least of it more amusing than conclusive. What has the question of printing to do with this matter? It was in the pre-printing days that the epic of Mahabharata much bigger in size than many modern poems put together came to be written. In spiritual matters the entire truth has been given by the *Veda* and who be he God himself can improve upon it and give us something absolutely original? He can only bring before our gaze the

radiance of illumination eternally shining there. In the very same way Mr Tilak has misapplied the tests of *artharada* and *Upapatti*. He has done well in pointing out the worthlessness of Western ethical systems based on utilitarianism, evolution or intuitionism. 'The greatest good of the greatest number' is a mere intellectual bubble. Does number include savages and brutes? Who can find out what conduces to the greatest good of the greatest number? If two persons differ as to such greatest good, who is to decide between them? This theory gives no prominence to the element of motive in action. Suppose the promoters of a railway company bribe the authorities to lay a railway line that action secures the good of the people. Is it therefore moral? The evolutionary and intuitional systems of ethics also are unsatisfactory and illogical. The real glory of man is not the *will to live* or the *will to power*, but the *will to attain the highest perfection* which is expressed by the term *Mumukshutva*. No system of ethics is sound which is not based on a sound system of metaphysics. The real defect in Mr Tilak's method is that in his attempt to socialise all spiritual activities there is the danger of his losing sight of the higher work of our spiritualising all social



activities till in the end the spirit is left face to face with God and in full possession of the priceless and eternal treasure of God-realisation. It is not possible to take up here for discussion all the ideas mentioned in Mr. Tilak's voluminous book. They may be taken up later on from time to time whenever necessary. The supreme importance of *Karma* action whether for legitimate gratification of legitimate desires or in a spirit of renunciation and detachment and dispassion has been recognised by all. The real difference is as to whether it is the final end and aim of life. Already India has been torn by empty futile discussion as to the ultimate elements of life as to whether the soul and God are one or one and yet not one, or two, as to whether Lakshmi and Narayana together or Narayana alone forms the Godhead, and so on. Mr. Tilak has added one more to the distracting discussion of the ultimates. As a matter of fact it seems to me that the Lord has expressed himself so clearly and has given to the world such a grand synthesis that it is impossible to mistake His gracious Message. I shall endeavour in the succeeding pages to make my position quite clear and I shall at the end sum up the Lord's gracious declaration of Truth in the Bhagavad Gita.

The first chapter is an introductory chapter and gives us a narrative of the events that led to the exposition of the great truths of life by the Lord. All the *blashya* and commentators on the Gita pass over this chapter lightly because the doctrinal portion commences only in Chapter II of the Gita.

We must remember in this connection the events in the Mahabharata which led up to the Gita. On the eve of the great war Vyasa asked Dhritarashtra if he would have the gift of higher vision by which he could see the tragic drama of the war as it developed in the battlefield of Kurukshetra. Dhritarashtra declined the boon as he could not bear to see his kindred suffering the fluctuating fortunes of war and preferred his congenital blindness to the offered vision of carnage. Vyasa then gave the power of vision to Sanjaya and asked Sanjaya to narrate to Dhritarashtra the events of the war as they took place. Sanjaya then informed the King that the great hero and saint Bhishma had fallen in battle. Dhritarashtra was stricken with grief and asked Sanjaya to narrate all the events in detail from the time when the opposing armies met in deadly war. Sanjaya then narrated the events and in the course of such narration described the faintness of heart that overcame Arjuna and the Lord's teachings to Arjuna.

to enable him to take up again his burden of duty in a spirit of detachment and dispassion and surrender of the fruit of work to God.

Madhusoodana Saraswati points out that there is a striking similarity between the form of dialogue adopted in the Gita and the similar form of dialogue adopted in the Upanishads e.g. the dialogue between Janaka and Yajnavalkya. This form is adopted to show the greatness of the subjects taught. When a great soul is the chosen recipient of the divine message given by the Over-soul, the occasion is unique and stirs us to the very depths of our being. The message lifted into the sunshine of clear-sighted peace the noble Arjuna tormented by the darkness of doubt and gloom. This fact by itself apart from the doctrines, actually taught makes our heart full of faith and puts us into a receptive mood. Further, by showing that Arjuna was the true and trustful disciple of the Lord we are given a clear idea as to what are the indispensable qualifications of discipleship

This chapter is known as the अर्जुनविषादयोगः i.e., dealing with the grief which overtook Arjuna when he was face to face with the great issues of life. The man who has a clear conception of duty should always feel equal to the demand made on his

energies and services by the imperious call of duty  
He

if he be called upon to face  
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined  
Great issues good or bad for human kind,  
Is happy as a Lover and attired  
With sudden brightness, like a Man inspired '

Arjuna was overwhelmed by *Soka* and *Moha* (grief and illusion) because his overflow of pity and tenderness at sight of the impending carnage of his kith and kin obscured the clarity of his mental vision. The situation is described vividly in a few brief strokes and we are prepared by this Chapter to receive the Lord's gracious message as given to us in the later chapters of the Gita.

In Sri Yamunacharya's *Githartha Sangraha* the purport of this chapter is stated thus:

अभ्यानेहकारण्यवमावर्तयिष्याकुलम् ।

पार्थे प्रपन्नमुद्दिश्य याम्नावतरणं कृतम् ॥

(The exposition of the scripture was made to save Arjuna who was agitated by misplaced affection and pity and by deeming his duty as a breach of duty and who sought refuge with Sri Krishna and prayed for enlightenment in a spirit of utter self-surrender)

I may point out here that according to Madhusudana Sarasvati and other Advaitic commentators the Gita is an exposition of the basic truth contained in the Mahavakya *Tatvamasi* (That art thou) He says that the first six Chapters प्रथमषट्क of the Gita deal with the त्व-पदार्थ (the soul) that the second six chapters द्वितीयषट्क of the Gita deal with the तत्त्व-पदार्थ (God) and that the third six chapters तृतीयषट्क of the Gita deal with the oneness of the soul and the oversoul He says further that the प्रथमषट्क deals with Karma marga, the द्वितीयषट्क with the Upasana marga and the तृतीयषट्क with the Gnana marga He says

तत्र तु प्रथमे काण्डे कर्म तत्यागवर्त्मना ।

त्वपदार्थो विशुद्धात्मा सोपपत्तिर्निरूप्यते ॥

द्वितीये भगवद्भक्तिनिष्ठावर्णनवर्त्मना ।

भगवान्परमानन्दस्तत्पदार्थोऽवधार्यते ॥

तृतीये तु तयोरैक्य वाक्यार्थो वर्ण्यते स्फुटम् ।

एवमप्यत्र काण्डानां सवन्धोऽस्ति परस्परम् ॥

He says further that by giving up *Karma Karma* and *Nishuddha Karma* and by doing *Nishkâma Karma*, we become pure क्षीणपापा and attain चित्तशुद्धि and साधनचतुष्टयसंपात्ति (the attainment of the fourfold *sadhanas*) These *sadhanas* are नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेक (the

discrimination of the eternal and the non-eternal) इदमुत्पल्लवमोषविराग (desirelessness in regard to the enjoyment of fruit here and beyond) दमदमादिसंपत्ति (the attainment of dispassion self control etc) and मुमुक्षुत्व (an over mastering desire for liberation and self realisation) He says that after such attainment the soul attains the full fruitfulness of श्रवण (hearing) मनन (meditation) and निदिध्यासन (ceaseless and intensive contemplation) Then it attains realisation (साक्षात्कार) through the *Maharajya sarama* It is only then that Avidya is overcome it is only then that *Bhrama* (wrong cognition) and *Samsaya* (doubt) vanish it is only then that संचित and आगामि karmas are destroyed only the Prarabdha Karmas holding sway like an arrow already let loose from the bow and hence bound to expend itself it is only then that we have वासनोदय and मनानाश consequent on तत्त्वज्ञान यमनिश्चयान्मोक्षायाम and प्रत्याहार are परिहृतानि (outer means) leading to धारणा, ध्यान and समाधि and when निर्विकल्प समाधि is attained then follows the attainment of जीव मुक्ति ।

In the above exposition the leading doctrines of the Advaitic school are briefly set out and I shall expound them fully later on The main doctrines of the Visishtadvaita school are given to

us in relation to the chapters of the Gita in these verses by Sri Yamunacharya

स्वधर्मज्ञानवैराग्यसाध्यभक्त्यैकगोचरः ।

नारायण पर ब्रह्म गीताशास्त्रे समीरितः ॥

ज्ञानकर्मात्मिके निष्ठे योगलक्षे सुसंस्कृते ।

आत्मानुभूतिसिद्ध्यर्थे पूर्वपट्टकेन चोदिते ॥

मध्यमे भगवत्तत्त्वयाथात्म्यावासिद्ध्यर्थे ।

ज्ञानकर्माभिनिर्वर्त्यो भक्तियोगः प्रकीर्तितः ॥

प्रधानपुरुषव्यक्तसर्वेश्वरविवेचनम् ।

कर्मधीर्भक्तिधीरित्यादिपूर्वशेषोऽन्तिमोदितः ॥

He says that in the first chapters we have the Karma Yoga and the Gnana Yoga leading to the realisation of the true nature of the individual soul (which according to the Visishtadvaitas is अणु and not विभु or identical with God as with the Advaitins), that in the second six chapters we have Bhakti Yoga leading to realisation of the true nature of Godhead, and that in the third six chapters we have the differentiation of Purusha and Prakriti, Karma, Bhakti, and other miscellaneous topics

As a matter of fact, though such broad divisions of the subject-matter of the Gita are in the main correct and enable us to have a clear view of the

procession of ideas in the Gita according to these two schools of thought we will find that the Gita lays stress throughout on God love and God realisation as being the *sole* means of liberation and describes in detail the path of Nishkama Karma again and again throughout the eighteen chapters as the sole means of attaining God love and God realisation. To avoid concentrating our attention on the few points of doctrinal differences among the various schools of thought and to enable us to have a general idea of the march of thought in the Gita I would say that the first six Chapters deal primarily with the Karma Yoga including Raja Yoga as means for the attainment of purity and concentration of mind that the second six chapters deal with the nature and manifestations and glories of Godhead and the Bhakti yoga and that the last six chapters deal with the Gnana yoga and a large number of topics connected with Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga.





## CHAPTER I

### Introductory

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच

धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता युयुत्सवः ।

मामकाः पाण्डवाश्चैव किमकुर्वत सजय ॥

Dhritarashtra said

O Sanjaya, on the Kurushetra which is the field of Dharma, what was done by my people and the Pandavas who had gathered together eager for battle ?

#### NOTES

1. धर्मक्षेत्रे । It was so called because it was a holy spot creating love of Dharma in hearts where such love was not existent before and intensifying such love in hearts where such love already existed. Manu says in Chapter II, verses 19 and 20

कुरुक्षेत्रं च मत्स्याश्च पांचाला शूरसेनका ।

एषु ब्रह्मर्षिदेशो वै ब्रह्मावर्तादनन्तरः ॥

एतद्देशप्रसूतस्य सकाशाद्भ्रजन्मनः ।

स्वं स्वं चरित्ति शिक्षेरन् पृथिव्या सर्वमानवा ॥

Sri Vedanta Dēśika says that धर्म means Dharma and that धर्मक्षेत्र in this place where unrighteous persons were to be slain and righteousness was to be established.

2. धर्मक्षेत्र । The Itihāsakāṇḍa of the Veda refer to it 'अथ कुरुक्षेत्रं दशवज्रमगम्' The Tabala Śruti says 'वृद्धमतिवयस्य याज्ञवल्क्यस्य सन्नु कुरुक्षेत्रं देवानां दशवज्रं सर्वेयमृतानां प्रदत्तवदनम्' Nilakantha thinks that the Kurukṣhetra referred to as धर्मक्षेत्र is different from these. Sri Madhusoodana Sarasvati refers also to the Salapaṭha Śruti 'कुरुक्षेत्रं च देववज्रमगम्' In the *Salapaṭha* it is said that King Kuru performed penance in the Kurukṣhetra and got a boon from Indra that all persons dying there should go to heaven. As Dhanapati points out it is not natural to say that Dhritaraṣṭra referred to धर्मक्षेत्र to distinguish this Kurukṣhetra from other Kurukṣhetras because such an idea would not have been in his mind — or to say as Sri Madhusoodana Sarasvati does that धर्मक्षेत्र was used to ask Sanjaya whether the holiness of the place induced the Pandavas to desist from slaughter on the field of battle or the Kauravas to turn away from fighting and thus ruin themselves by giving up the kingdom unrighteously wrested from the Pandavas. It seems to me that the question is quite natural and consistent with Dhritaraṣṭra's

character He was no doubt avaricious but was not without a certain element of purity of nature, because the Sri Bhagavata shows in the first Skandha that his heart was turned to God by Vidura's words and he attained salvation by meditation and devotion after renouncing the world He was not a hardened worldling like his sons He knew that Sri Krishna was God incarnate and that Kurukshetra was the field of Dharma After learning about the fall of Bhishma, he asked Sanjaya to narrate all that took place in the field of Dharma and in the presence of the Lord of Dharma He had of course a strong bias for his own children but that did not obscure his mental vision as to the holy character of the battlefield. Hence it seems to me that Mr. C. M. Padmanabha-chariar's suggestion that he suspected foul play by Pandavas in spite of the holiness of the place is a far-fetched one.

3 भाषाः This shows his partialty for his own side It may also be that he intends a mild rebuke suggesting that his children were really blind like himself. Some sapient modern scholars who see a racial complexion in everything say that it means Aryas as opposed to the polyandrous Pandavas who formed a different race This is utterly absurd

1 Some commentators understand the verse in a mystical sense Venkatanatha says that पमक्ष्य is Sri Krishna's body of which the life was the Pandavas (मम प्राणा हि पण्डवः) and that the Kauravas were consumed by the flame of Sri Krishna's righteous wrath He says further that this secondary meaning is inferable from the words though it is not the primary meaning and cites as an instance the famous verse of the Ramayana मानिषाद etc by way of analogy Abhinava Guptacharya says that क्षेय means the body and that the war referred to is between the righteous and the unrighteous tendencies in man These interpretations have no doubt elements of beauty in them but they are obviously far fetched and unacceptable

सजय उवाच—

दृष्ट्वा तु पाण्डुधार्मिकं क्रूरं दुर्योधनस्तदा ।

आचारमुपसंगम्य राजा वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ २ ॥

Sanjaya said—

King Duryodhana, seeing the Pandava Army set in battle array and approaching the preceptor (Drona), said these words

### NOTES

1 आचारमुपसंगम्य He did not send for Drona

as a King might send for his General He went to him because of the fear of the enemy which unnerved him, because of his lingering reverence for his teacher, and because of considerations of policy

2 राजा He was the *de facto* king, and the unquestioning obedience of Bhishma, Drona and other servants of the sovereign to the latter which is the foundation of social and political solidarity was thus justified, the result being left to God to ordain and grant in His Eternal Wisdom and Love

पश्यैतां पाण्डुपुत्राणामाचार्य महती चमूम् ।

व्यूढां द्रुपदपुत्रेण तव शिष्येन धीमता ॥ ३ ॥

See, O preceptor ! this great army of the sons of Pandu, set in battle array by thy disciple, the son of Drupada

### NOTES

1 He referred to Dhrishtadyumna in particular and described him as Drupada's son to kindle an ancient hatred in Drona's breast Some commentators say that he even praised the son of Drupada as wise to hint that Drona was unwise in having taught the science of war fully to his enemy

2 It is stated by some commentators that he slyly hinted by placing ५१ द्रुपदपौत्रं and भीमार्जुनौ together that Drona was specially the friend and teacher of the Pandavas and was partial to them. This is a somewhat far fetched suggestion.

मत्र नृप मध्वपासा भीमाजुनसमा युधि ।  
 युयुधानो विराटश्च द्रुपदश्च महारथ ॥ ४ ॥  
 भृष्टकेतुश्चैवितानं वीरीराजश्च धीमयान् ।  
 पुरुजित्कुन्तिभोजश्च शैब्यश्च नरवृणव ॥ ५ ॥  
 युधामन्युश्च विक्रान्त उत्तमौजाश्च धीर्यवान् ।  
 सौमित्रो द्रौपदेयाश्च मय एव महारथा ॥ ६ ॥

Here are valiant warriors with mighty bows who are equal in prowess to Bhima and Arjuna. Here are Dhrishtaketu, Chekitana the powerful king of Kasi, Purujit, Kuntibhoja, Saibya who is a great chief of men, the puissant Yudhishthira, the valiant Uttamauja, Drupada, and the sons of Drupadi. All these are Maharathas.

#### NOTES

1 His pointed reference to Bhima and Arjuna shows how he quailed whenever he thought of them.

2. A *Mahanatha* is a warrior who riding in a great car can fight successfully ten thousand bowmen. A warrior fighting in a chariot who can fight effectively against another warrior similarly seated is called a *Samaratha*. An *Atmatha* is one who can fight against innumerable hosts including many *Samarathas*.

अस्माकं तु विशिष्टा ये तान्निबोध द्विजोत्तम ।  
नायका मम सैन्यस्य संश्रयं तान्ब्रवीमि ते ॥ ७ ॥

O Chief of Brahmins ! know the Chiefs of our army whom I mention to you for your remembrance

### NOTES

1. द्विजात्तमे. Madhusoodana says that this word may have been used to flatter Drona by praising him as a noble and holy man or to convey a hint that Drona was after all a Brahmin and not likely to be a great and powerful warrior

भवान् भीष्मश्च कर्णश्च कृपश्च समितिजयः ।  
अश्वत्थामा विकर्णश्च सौमदत्तिस्तथैव च ॥ ८ ॥

They are yourself, Bhishma, Karna, Kripa who is always victorious in battle, Asvatthama, Vikarna and Saumadatti

## NOTES

- 1 Another reading substitutes सि पुराज, for सौमवति He is Jayadratha

अन्ये च बहव शूरा भव्ये स्यक्तजीविता ।  
नानाशस्त्रमहरणा सर्वे युद्धविशारदाः ॥ ९ ॥

And many other valiant men who are ready to lay down their lives for my sake, who wield diverse weapons and missiles of war, and who are masters of the art of war

## NOTES

- 1 अक्षजीवती There is in this word an under current of suggestion—not voluntary but involuntary and inauspicious—that they had already lost their lives for his sake

अपर्याप्त तदस्माकं बल भीमामिरक्षितम् ।  
पर्याप्त त्विदमेतेषां बल भीमामिरक्षितम् ॥ १० ॥

Yet our force protected by Bhisbma, is not sufficient, while their army protected by Bhima is sufficient

## NOTES

- 1 अपर्याप्त has been said to mean (1) insufficient or (2) unlimited while पर्याप्त means (1) suffi



cient, or (2) limited. But the first-mentioned meanings are more in keeping with Duryodhana's character and the general spirit of the descriptions of the contending hosts in this chapter. We have already stated that Duryodhana was inspired by fear. A greater number of heroic leaders who blew on conches with specific names is stated on the side of the Pandavas than on the side of the Kauravas. The blowing of such conches is said to have inspired the Kauravas with fear. Duryodhana had also a lurking, though mean and unmerited suspicion, that Bhishma favoured the other side. It is further noteworthy that Duryodhana, though his army consisted of eleven *Akshauhins* while that of the Pandavas consisted only of seven *Akshauhins*, had already called the latter as महती चमूम् (great army). He had already described the great warrior on the side of the Pandavas as equal in prowess to Bhima and Arjuna. Above all, there was the fact of Sri Krishna being on the side of the Pandavas.

अयनेषु च सर्वेषु यथाभागमवस्थिता ।

भीष्ममेवाभिरक्षन्तु भवन्तः सर्व एव हि ॥ ११ ॥

Therefore, let all of you, each stationed in his place in his respective division, guard Bhishma

१७२३

The great courage and inspiration of the General is into are important factors in warfare everywhere and especially so in oriental warfare.

महय यशस्योदये नुः पुरः विनामसः ।

विदनाद् विनयेनो दाह दग्धो मया यवान् ॥ १७२३ ॥

Then the valiant and aged grandfate of the Kurus (Bhisma) blew loudly on his conch Simhanala (of the lion's roar) in order to cheer him up.

Notes

1 Bhisma saw Duryodhana's faintness of heart from afar and blew a high and loud note on his conch to hearten him.

2 The verse shows that Bhisma was valiant (महयशः) though old unlike Duryodhana who was a coward though young.

3 मया Some commentators say that it may refer to the army of the Kuravas or to the army of the Pandavas as a sign of the commencement of military operations and an assurance that they will be given an opportunity of showing their military prowess or to Sri Krishna as the occasion—divinely predestined—for manifesting the object and the glory of His incarnation.

ततः शङ्खाश्च भेर्यश्च पणवानकगोमुखाः ।  
सहस्रैवाभ्यहन्यन्त स शब्दस्तुमुलोऽभवत् ॥ १३ ॥

Then conches and kettledrums, tabors and drums, and cow-horns were simultaneously sounded ; and the noise became a deafening uproar.

ततः श्रुतेर्हयैर्युक्ते महति स्यन्दने स्थितौ ।  
माधवः पाण्डवश्चैव दिव्यौ शङ्खौ प्रदधमतुः ॥

पाञ्चजन्यं हृषीकेशो देवदत्तं धनंजयः ।  
पौण्ड्रं दध्मौ महाशङ्ख भूमिकर्मा वृकोदरः ॥ १५ ॥

अनन्तविजयं राजा कुन्तीपुत्रो युधिष्ठिरः ।  
नकुलः सहदेवश्च सुघोषमणिपुष्पकौ ॥ १६ ॥

Then Krishna and Arjuna, seated in a great chariot to which white horses were yoked, blew their divine conches Hrishikesa (Krishna) blowing the conch Panchajanya, and Dhananjaya (Arjuna) blowing the conch Devadatta. Vrikodara (Bhima) of terrible deeds blew the mighty conch Poundra, King Yudhishtira blew the conch Anantavijaya Nakula and Sahadeva blew the conches Sughosha and Manipushpaka.

### NOTES

1. माधव means the lord of Sri, the goddess of

fortune. The word hints that success was to be on the side of the Pandavas.

2 The separate mention of the warriors and their conches in the army of the Pandavas shows its real might in spite of its smallness of numbers. It was fighting on the side of righteousness, the noblest chivalry of the time was on its side and the grace of God was upon it.

काश्यश्च परमेष्वास शिशुङ्डी च महारथः ।

धृष्टदुम्नो विराटश्च सात्यकिश्चापराजितः ॥

द्रुपदो द्रौपदेयश्च सर्वशः पृथिवीपते ।

सौमद्रश्च महाबाहुः शङ्खान्धस्तु पृथक् पृथक् ॥

The mighty bowed King of Kasi, the Mahāratha Sikhandi, Driṣṭadyumna Virata the unconquered Satyaki, Drupada the Draupadeyas (Droupadi's sons), and the mighty armed Saubhadra (Abhimanyu) blew their conches separately on all sides.

स भोगे चार्तरक्ष्णानां हृदयानि व्यदारयत् ।

नभश्च पृथिवीं चैव तुमुलो व्यनुमादयत् ॥

That uproar rent the hearts of the sons of Dhritarashtra, filling the earth and sky with the sound.

अथ व्यवस्थितान्दृष्ट्वा धार्तराष्ट्रान्कपिध्वजः ।

प्रवृत्ते शस्त्रसंपाते धनुस्सम्य पाण्डवः ॥ २० ॥

Then the monkey-bannered Arjuna, on seeing the marshalled Kaurava forces and when the battle was about to commence by the discharge of military weapons, took up his bow.

### NOTES

1. अथ. This word always marks a change of topic. It may refer also to the fact that something unexpected was imminent. The word is also said to be auspicious in itself and is a मङ्गलशब्द and introduces us to the blessed Gita.

ओंकारश्चाथशब्दश्च द्वावेतौ ब्रह्मण पुरा ।

कण्ठ मित्वा विनिर्यातौ तस्मान्माङ्गलिकावुभौ ॥

(The two words Om and Atha came out of Brahma's throat, finding a way for themselves. Hence both of them are auspicious).

हृषीकेशं तदा वाक्यमिदमाह महीपते ।

अर्जुन उवाच

सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत ॥ २१ ॥

यावदेतान्निरीक्षेऽहं योद्धुकामानवस्थितान् ।

कैर्मया सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन्नणसमुद्यमे ॥ २१ ॥

योत्स्यमानानयेत्सेऽहं य एतेऽयं समागताः ।  
 धार्तराष्ट्रस्य दुपुत्रेयुत्रे प्रियसिन्धवीरव ॥ २३ ॥

And spoke thus to Krishna, O King

Arjuna said—

'Station my Car, O Achyuta, between the two armies, so that I may see who have come here longing for battle and with whom I must fight in this great work of war, and gaze on all who have assembled here for fighting, desirous of pleasing in battle the evil minded son of Dhritarastra

#### NOTES

1 अहं Being of a noble and deliberative nature he did not precipitately run away from the war under the influence of his impulse of tenderness as Duryodhana forced on the war under the influence of lust of dominion. He spoke and awaited illumination

2 अच्युत Arjuna was not afraid that by being between the two armies he would be singled out for attack when unready because it was a time of righteous warfare and hence no one would attack him when he was unready, whatever was the cause espoused by him and because अच्युत—He of the Omnipotent will—was by his side

3 We may note also that consciousness of personal doing which is indicated by the frequent use of the first personal pronoun etc in these lines मे रथ, निरीक्षेऽहं, अवक्षेऽहं etc This shows that he was beginning to have the fundamental error of his being a doer According to the Advaitic school of thought the soul is not a doer but is अखण्डसच्चिदानन्द (Infinite Being, Consciousness, and Bliss) According to the Visishtadvaita school the soul is no doubt infinitely subtle but is सच्चिदानन्द According to the Dvaita school the soul is not स्वतन्त्र but is dependent on God and the idea of his being a doer is hence an illusion In any view, therefore, the soul has a different origin, nature, and destiny from nature (Prakṛiti), and it is the identification of the soul with the properties and tendencies of the non-ego that brings about *Samsāra*, just as the realisation of the true nature of the soul brings about the bliss of liberation and beatitude

संजय उवाच

पचमुक्तो दृषीकेशो गुडाकेशेन भारत ।

लेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये स्थापयित्वा रथोत्तमम् ॥ २४ ॥

भीष्मद्रोणप्रमुखतः सर्वेषां च महीक्षिताम् ।

उवाच पार्थ पश्यैतान्समवेतान्कुरुनिति ॥ २५ ॥

Sanjaya said—

Thus addressed by Arjuna, Krishna stayed the great car between the two armies in front of Bhishma and Drona and all the chieftains there and said 'See O Partha, the assembled kurna.'

### NOTES

1 Jish means one who has conquered sleep—a man of pure sattvic nature capable of perfect self mastery.

2 I have shown above how the isolated stationing of the car was not a strategic blunder because that was a time of yamyudh and because the Lord of wills was there and no human will could act without His direction.

3 Bhishma has described this situation in the beautiful verse that occurs in the first Skandha of the Bhagavata

सपदि ससि पयो निरान्य मध्ये  
 निजमयोर्षस्य रथ निवेद्य ।  
 स्थितवति परीनिकायुरक्षा  
 हतवति पार्थसले रदिमभाक्षु ॥

(May my love rest on Arjuna's friends who hearing his comrade's words and stationing the car



between his friend's army and their foes' army drew within Himself by His eyes the lives of the army of the foes )

तत्रापश्यत्स्थितान्पार्थः पितृनथ पितामहान् ।  
आचार्यान्मातुलान्प्रातृन्पुत्रान्पौत्रान्सखींस्तथा ॥

श्वशुरान्सुहृदश्चैव सेनयोरुभयोरपि ।  
तान्समीक्ष्य स कौन्तेयः सर्वान्विन्धून्वस्थितान् ॥

कृपयापरयाविष्टः विषीदन्निदमब्रवीत् ।

Then Partha saw there in both the armies uncles and grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, brothers, sons, and grandsons, comrades fathers-in-law, and friends Seeing his kinsmen thus marshalled in battle array, and with his heart wrung by supreme pity, he spok thus in sorrow

### NOTES

1. Arjuna's grief is not like Duryodhana's grief Duryodhana's grief was owing to दृष्टमय, caused by his apprehension of the loss of earthly things Arjuna's grief was owing to अदृष्टमय caused by his apprehension of various evils to himself, to the society, and to Dharma by the impending slaughter The two kinds of grief show the real natures of the two men.

2 The Lord does not say that mercy is improper. Indeed in the last sloka in Chapter XI of the Gita He says

मत्कमहृन्मत्परमा मद्रक्त सङ्गवर्जितः ।

निर्वैरः सवभूतेषु यः स मामेति ॥ ५॥ ५५ ॥

There He describes the soul that has risen to the highest altitudes of Love and renunciation. It is only he that has soared on the wings of Law and Light that can live in the pure empyrean of Love. Mercy which is accompanied by selfish attachment to the world and which sets itself in an attitude of hostility to Law is not a Godward quality.

3 As all men are not of Sattvic nature the world requires दण्ड (the law of pains and penalties for violation and transgressions). Arjuna himself in the राजधम says

राजदण्डमयादके पापा पापं न कुर्वते ।

यमदण्डमयादके परलोकमयादपि ॥

परस्परमयादेके पापा पापं न कुर्वते ।

एव सावित्रिके सोके सर्वे दण्डे प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥

(Some refrain from sins because of fear of punishment by the king others refrain from sins from fear of punishment by the God of death yet

others refrain from sins from fear of one another  
(Thus does the world rest on punishment )

The punishments inflicted by a just king in accordance with law are like the punishments of God. Those can no more affect the former than these can affect the latter.

4. Hence the unrestricted application of the principle of non-resistance will only intensify selfishness and vice and crime in the case of the evil people and will lead to the disruption of society, though there are instances in life as well as in literature (e.g. the case of Jean Valjean) of a true conversion of the heart brought about by absolute non-resistance. Punishment for misdeeds is necessary to reform the ill-doer and preserve the moral order of the world. Even in the case of the supreme pain and penalty of death for certain atrocious crimes, the Hindu doctrine of Karma gives us a real and new aspect of the philosophy of punishment, because the next birth will certainly be all the better for the working out of the great evil by the equally great punishment. Ordinary men may not realise this fact and it may be said that this is not demonstrable by reason. But those whose consciousness is extended and perfected by yoga can realise the procession of the re-incarnations of the soul and

the acts done and the fruits enjoyed by the embodied soul

5 The Hindu religion has always taught *Nirriti* to be higher than *Prarriti* but has taught also at the same time that it is only the man who has followed loyally the law of legitimate *Prarriti* that can tread the higher path of *Nirriti* and attain the bliss of beatitude

6 Arjuna's mercy was strongly coloured through and through by elements of selfishness and egotism. He had not lost his love of empire. His vow on behalf of Draupadi was ever present in his mind. He was thinking of the loss of all kingly pleasure owing to the removal of all relations and friends by the cruel hand of death. The ideas of 'I' and 'mine' were in the forefront of his thoughts. The mercy of selfishness is a source of weakness. It is different in quality and degree from the divine mercy of absolute unselfishness and love and renunciation.

7 Again our real kinsmen and friends are those who are lovers of God, even though not connected with us by ties of kinship and friendship. The latter are not our real kinsmen and friends if they violate the law of God.

- 8. कृपया परया Some commentators say that it means कृपया अपरया i. e., unworthy pity. Others say that it means a second fit of mercy as Arjuna was overpowered once before by tenderness to his cousins and said

न चाह कामये पापमपि कीटपिपीलयो ।

किं पुनर्जातिषु वध कामयेय कथंचन ।

एतदर्थं मया तात पञ्च ग्रामाः वृताः पुरा ॥

(Udyoga Parva)

(I do not wish harm even to worms and ants  
How can I wish the death of my kith and kin?  
That was why I chose five villages before)

अर्जुन उवाच

दृष्ट्वेमं स्वजनं कृष्ण युयुत्सुं समुपारिखितम् ।

सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति ॥ २८ ॥

वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते ।

गाण्डीवं संसते हस्तात्त्वक्चैव परिदह्यते ॥ २९ ॥

न च शक्तोऽन्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः ।

निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशव ॥ ३० ॥

Arjuna said

O Krishna! Seeing these my kinsman, gathered together through lust of battle, my limbs

fail and my mouth is parched. There is a tremor in my frame, and my hair stands on end with horror. My bow Gandiva slips from my hand, and my skin has a burning fever. I am not able to stand steady and erect, and my mind seems to be in a whirl. I see inauspicious omens. O Keshava

## NOTES

1 Sri Ramanuja points out that Arjuna's grief was due to his nobility of nature his mercifulness his love of kinsmen and his fear of *Adharma* and evil consequences to society. He says that Arjuna was *महात्मनः* (high souled) *परोक्षदर्शिनः* (very merciful) and *दीप्यमानः* (deeply attached to kith and kin) and was inspired by *पुण्यं* *परोक्षं*, and *अपरोक्षं* (love of kin supreme pity and fear of sin)

2 But this tenderness was based on a wrong conception of the nature of the soul and of *Dharma*. That was why it became a source of unnerving grief (*विषादः*). The same love if based on a right notion of the nature of the soul and *Dharma* would have caused joy and self poise.

3 Our duty is to carry out the Lord's commandments irrespective of results and with a full realisation of the nature of the soul. While a

state of universal peace is the goal of human endeavour and while all of us fondly dream of a happy warless earth

“Robed in universal harvest up to either pole  
she smiles

Universal ocean washing softly all her warless  
isles”—

none should shrink from duty Make war against war but never shrink from duty if it involves war for the sake of duty and righteousness Duty is higher than love and mercy which are inspired by selfishness and ignorance, though selfless and wise love and mercy—divine in its fulness and universal in its application is the highest goal. Sri Rama was at the same time embodied law and incarnate mercy He was विप्रवान् धर्मः and he said

अभय सर्वभूतेभ्यो ददाम्येतद्व्रत मम ।

(I give shelter unto all. Such is my vow)

Love won through loyal obedience to Law will be selfless, dynamic, complete, and universal, and will shine forth for ever and save its object Tender ness which is a compound of weakness, grief, and selfishness will be selfish, powerless, fragmentary, and limited, and will set itself in opposition to Law and will ruin itself and cannot help its object

4 The word *महिम्ना* in verse No 27 shows that *raja* was the active agent in Arjuna and that Arjuna became its object. It was deep-rooted in his nature and over powered him, though he was trained in the habit of obedience to Dharma. His *Soka* (grief) and *Moha* (illusion) had to be dispelled by the Lord by teaching him the true nature of the soul and the true nature of *Dharma*.

5 He whose mercy is in opposition to Law and is coloured by attachments desires selfish impulses, and ignorance and who yet wants to inaugurate an era of mercy—as if God who is Law is not at the same time Infinite Love and Mercy—is unable to bring into existence the era that he yearns for because his love is not the fulfilment of Law and is hence not full but partial not dynamic but weak not radiant but clouded, not universal but local in relation to time and place and persons not divine but human. Absolute universal, divine, and selfless love and mercy which are the result of fulfilment of the Law would lead to joy and realisation (*मानन्द* and *ज्ञान*) and not to grief and illusion (*सोऽह* and *मोह*).

न ख मेयोऽनुपपन्नामि हत्या स्वजनमाहवे ।

न काङ्क्षे विजयं कृष्ण न ख राज्यं सुखानि ख ॥



I see no auspicious result from slaying kinsmen in battle I do not desire victory nor sovereignty nor pleasures.

### NOTES

1 श्रेय It means auspiciousness or our real good The *Kathopanishad* clearly differentiates *sreyas* and *preyas*

2 कृष्ण He who takes away our sin and grief and draws our hearts to him in a passion of love and devotion. Hence that word is used here, as Arjuna prays for the removal of his grief and illusion

3 In the *Bhashyotharshaddeepika* there is a suggestion that Arjuna does not want these lower results as they would lead his mind away from the love of the lord, and the commentator quotes the verse

यस्यानुग्रहमिच्छामि तस्य वित्त हराम्यहम् ।

(I take away the wealth of him to whom I wish to show grace )

This idea is beautiful but it is not in place in this chapter

किं नो राज्येन गोविन्द किं भोगैर्जीवितेन वा ।  
येषामर्थे काङ्क्षितं नो राज्यं भोगाः सुखानि च ॥

त इमेऽवस्थिता युद्धे प्राणास्त्यक्त्वा धनानि च ।  
 आचार्याः पितरः पुत्रास्तथैष च पितामहा ॥ ३३ ॥  
 मातुला भ्रात्रुरा पौत्रा दयाला सवर्धिनस्तथा ।  
 यतात्र हन्तुमिच्छामि भृतोऽपि मधुसूदन ॥ ३४ ॥

What can we get, O Govinda, by sovereignty or by enjoyments or by life itself, when they for whose sake we desire sovereignty and instruments of pleasure and pleasure have come here to fight abandoning life and riches—teachers, fathers, sons, grandfathers uncles, fathers in law, grand-sons, brothers in law, and other relatives? I do not wish to kill them even though they kill me

### NOTES

1 माग and मुख भोग mean मुचसाधन (means of pleasure) here (Madhusoodana Sarasvati.)

अपि त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य हेतो किं नु महीकृते ।  
 निहस्य धार्तराष्ट्राज का प्रीति स्याज्जनादन ॥

(I do not wish to kill them) even for the sake of the sovereignty of the three worlds Will I do so for this earth? What happiness will come to us, O Janardana by killing the sons of Dhritarashtra?

पापमेवाभयेदृगान्हत्वैतानाततायिनः ।

तृणान्नाहं वयं हन्तुं धार्तराष्ट्रान् स्वबान्धवान् ।  
स्वजनं हि कथं हत्वा सुखिनः स्याम माधव ॥

By killing these murderous enemies sin will cling to us. Therefore we should not kill these sons of Dhritarashtra who are our own kinsmen. Oh Madhava, How can we be happy through killing our own kinsmen?

#### NOTES

1 आततायिनः -An *átatayin* is one who makes a wanton and murderous attack. The word refers to the incendiary, the poisoner, the armed assassin, the brigand, the usurper of land, and the seducer of another's wife.

अभिदो गरदश्चैव शलपाणिर्धनापह ।

क्षेत्रदारहरश्चैव षडेते ह्याततायिनः ॥

2 Arjuna argues thus. The Dharma Sastra says, do not kill any one (न हिंस्यात् सर्वभूतानि). The Arthasastra allows the killing of the *átatayins*. Even here Katyayana prohibits their killing if they are elderly men worthy of reverence. It may also be that they should not be killed if that would result in the disappearance of the whole family (*kula*). We may here refer to the verses

आततायिनि आकृष्ट तपः शीघ्रायन-मताः ।

वधस्तत्र तु यैव स्यात् पापे हानि कथो मत्त ॥

(Katyayan a )

आततायिनमुत्कृष्ट वृत्तस्वाध्यायसंयुतम् ।

यो न दन्याद्वधमात सोऽश्वमेधकृत् समेत् ॥

(Drishtaspati )

In any event we should follow the mandate of the Dharma Sastra which is higher than the Artha sastra. Then sin will not cling to us but will cling to our opponents, Yajnavalkya says

स्मृत्यार्षिरोधे स्यादस्तु वलवान्मयवहोरतः ।

अथेयासात् वलवदमशाऽमिति स्थितिः ॥

3 The golden rule of non resistance of evil is as fully eulogised in Hindu sacred books as elsewhere. But I have already pointed out above its application and stated to whom it is an absolute rule and to whom it is a relative rule

4 Another meaning of the first line is this

Sin will attach only to them the Atatayins by killing us who are unresisting" (अस्मान् हत्वा एतान् आततायिन पापमेवाश्रमेत्)

यद्यप्येते न पश्यन्ति लोमोपहतचेतसाः ।

कुलक्षयकरं दोष मित्रद्रोहे च पातकम् ॥ ३७ ॥

कथं न ज्ञेयमस्माभिः पापादस्मान्निवर्तितुम् ।  
कुलक्षयकृतं दोष प्रपश्यद्भिर्जनार्दन ॥ ३८ ॥

O Janardana! Although these being over-powered by covetousness do not realise the sin in destroying the family and no crime in hostility to friends, should not we, who realise the harm and evil of destruction of family, learn to turn away from this sin?

### NOTES

1. उपहत. upadhi is an outside cause that colours our character and clouds our vision.

2. Arjuna's parade of argument is due to learning as distinguished from truth All his objections and the fundamental wrong notions on which they are based are answered by the Lord in Chapter II.

3 His main point is that only that duty which brings about a desirable fruit should be done.

फलतोऽपि च यत्कर्म नानर्थेनानुबध्यते ।

केवलं प्रीतिहेतुत्वात्तद्धर्म इति कथ्यते ॥

कुलक्षये प्रणश्यन्ति कुलधर्माः सनातनाः ।

धर्मे नष्टे कुले कृत्स्नमधर्मोऽभिभवत्युत ॥ ३९ ॥

On the extinction of the family, the everlasting family dharmas perish and when such Dharma perishes, Adharma overpowers and envelops the entire family

### NOTES

1 उत्पन्नाः They include family traditions, observances virtues and graces

2. सनातना means handed down from generation to generation (व्यपराप्रप्ता )

3 The word धर्म means that which sustains society'

भार ॥ दममिह्याहु धर्मो धारयति प्रजा ।

अधर्माग्निमयात्स्वप्न प्रदुष्यन्ति पुलञ्जिय ।

श्रीपु दुष्टास्तु चाप्येव आयते वर्णसकर ॥ ४० ॥

Owing to overpowering force of Adharma the women of the families become sinful and corrupt and when women become sinful and tainted O Varahineya, there ariseth *Varna Sankara* (confusion of castes)

### NOTES

1 Everywhere in all great civilisations the place assigned to womanhood in the racial scheme of life is a perfect and never failing measure of the

refinement and nobility of that race. The Hindu race has always had a high conception of womanhood and its great function as the preserver of life and the guardian of the emotional and spiritual refinements of humanity. Manus says

यत्न नार्यस्तु पूज्यन्ते रमन्ते तत्र देवताः ।  
यत्रैतास्तु न पूज्यन्ते सर्वास्तदाफलाः क्रियाः ॥

शोचन्ति जामयो यत्र विनश्यत्याशु तत्कुलम् ।  
न शोचन्ति तु यतैता वर्धते तद्धि सर्वदा ॥

सतुष्टो भार्यया भर्ता भर्ता भार्या तथैव च ।  
यस्मिन्नेव कुले नित्यं कल्याणं तत्र वै ध्रुवम् ॥

In a famous passage in the Bhagavata in the 3rd skandha 14th adhyaya there is a beautiful and vivid description of everything that the individual and the race owe to the purity and goodness and refinement of the women of the race

सर्वाश्रमानुपादाय स्वाश्रमेण कलत्रवान् ।  
व्यसनार्णवमत्येति जलयानैर्यथार्णवम् ॥

यामाहुरात्मनो ह्यर्धं श्रेयस्कामस्य मानिनि ।  
यस्या स्वधुरमध्यस्य पुमाश्चरति विज्वरः ॥

यामाश्रित्येन्द्रियारातीन्दुर्जयानितराश्रमैः ।  
वयं जयेम ह्येलाभिर्दस्यून् दुर्गपतिर्यथा ॥

न वयं प्रभवामहे त्वामनुष्णं गृहधरि ।

अप्यायुषा वा कात्स्न्येन न वाम्य पुनर्गृह्य ॥

2. This grateful sense of the refinement and sweetness of true and tender and gracious womanhood never blinded our race to the demands of social and spiritual life and our ancestors had further a clear apprehension of the truth that an idolatrous worship of women defeats the very object of worship by rendering it less and less fit to be such an object because weak and erring human beings when offered the incense of worship that is due only to God

Assume the god

Affect to nod

And seem to shake the spheres

A thoughtful writer has pointed out that there is a vital connection between such idolatry and divorce in some countries in the west. The graces of inner life are preserved and kept warm and sweet only when surrounded by the atmosphere of spiritual life and illumined and enkindled by the golden sun of Divine Grace

3. Indeed the entire social system of the Hindus derives its beauty and its immortal vitality from this unique and harmonious combination of



reverence for womanhood and obedience to Dharma on the part of women. Such reverence for womanhood is made a source of uplift for men as well as women by being kept within bounds under the inspiration of a higher reverence—the reverence for Dharma as the command of God.

4. Manu warns us against disobedience to Dharmas in the matter of marital duties etc., because it results in the loss of those family virtues and graces which are the result of centuries of self-restrained culture.

कुविवाहै क्रियालोपैर्वैदानध्ययनेन च ।

कुलान्यकुलता यान्ति ब्राह्मणातिक्रमेण च ॥

*Ch. III 63.*

5. The sweetness of family life and the preservation of family virtues which is the only secure basis of national greatness depend upon the existence of *true* and *refined* love. The slightest taint in mind is sure to lead to taint in speech and action and to the ultimate corruption of family morality and eventually of national morality. Manu says

स्त्रिया तु रोचमानाया सर्वे तद्रोचते कुलम् ।

तस्यां त्वरोचमानाया सर्वमेव न रोचते ॥

Kulluka says in his excellent gloss on this verse.

स्त्रियो म नादिना कान्तिमस्यो भृत्येहविपयतया परपुरुष  
 सेपकविरहात् तत्कुल दीप्त मवति । तस्या पुनररोचमानाया भृत्यिदि  
 दतया भवान्तरसपेकात् सकलमव कुल मलिनं भवति ॥

6 Hence it is that Arjuna points out the tremendous and far reaching consequences of taint in families due to the taint brought in by the corruption of women. In no place in the Gita does the Lord deny this. The Lord goes deeper and gives us the fundamental basis of Dharma and devotion which will bar all such taints from coming in in open or insidious forms. Arjuna says that the worst result of taint is *Iarna Sankara*. Individual unhappiness and impurity and even the loss of family virtues and graces are of limited application in time and space compared with that utter unloosening of social bonds and that utter confusion of births and social gradations which are implied in the term *Iarna Sankara* the import and importance of which we must fully understand if we want to understand the Hindu scheme of life.

7 This is not the proper occasion to deal at length with the real spirit of the Hindu institution of caste. Whatever be the worthlessness of the miserable travesty of it that is now prevalent in modern India, there is no doubt that it preserved the Hindu civilisation from being overborne by the

forces of barbarism and disorder within and without. Such an unsympathetic observer of men and manners in India like Abbe Dubois says "I believe caste division to be in many respects *chef d'œuvre*, the happiest effort of Hindu legislation. I am persuaded that it is simply and solely due to the distribution of the people into castes, that India did not lapse into a state of barbarism, that she preserved and perfected the arts and sciences of civilisation, while most other nations remained in a state of barbarism. Such an institution was probably the only means that the most clear-sighted prudence could devise for maintaining a state of civilisation."

8 The principle of the caste system is social co-operation on a federal basis. It enables the society to conserve and perfect hereditary aptitudes. It prevents those terrible social unsettlements that are sure to result from frequent encroachments by one social group upon the occupations and pursuits of another. It does not take away the incentive to exertion because under the caste system as created and preserved, the four social groups were so strong numerically that efficiency and energy had always free play and free scope for self-manifestation and self-development in the best interests of the nation as a whole. All possibility

of friction due to a tyrannical sense of superiority was taken away by directing the gaze of every man upon his duties rather than upon his rights. Similarly all possibility of friction due to the pride of numerical superiority was eliminated by pointing out that each man must reap the fruit of his own actions independently of others though all might co-operate here and delight in doing evil things. Not a single co operator in the doing of evil will or can offer the slightest help to save us from the consequences of our sin. Above all each man's gaze was perpetually drawn to the centre i.e. God and he had no time to dig holes to push and bury alive his brother-man or his sister-woman. It was also declared that a devout and pious Panchama is dearer to the Lord than a proud Brahmin learned but destitute of the love of God. As Prahlada says in his lyric outburst of devotion in the VII th skandha of the Bhagavata.

विभ्राद्विपद्मपुतादरविन्दनाम  
 पादारविन्दविमुखाञ्छुपय मरिष्ठम् ।  
 मन्थे तर्क्षितमनोवचने द्विताय  
 प्राणं पुनासि स'कुर्वं न तु मृरिमान् ॥

9 This subject will be dealt with later on in detail in considering verse 18, Chapter IV. The word

*Varna* has been grossly misunderstood by modern interpreters of our sacred books—more often by so-called scholars within our fold than by the Western *savants*. This is due to an unmeaning hatred of the caste system rather than to a clear-sighted and impartial investigation of the truth. I shall discuss the meaning of *Varna* more fully later on. Suffice it to say here that it does not mean letter or colour or description. It means the commingling of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* in different degrees. But this does not mean any special superiority or inferiority. Individual effort and in a large degree early nurture might nay, certainly would so alter the initial endowments of the *gunas* that when a man comes to the age when he can effectively serve his country and better his own personality, the man who was born in a higher group as the result of past *karma* would not be able to bear comparison for a moment with the man who happened to be born in a lower group. Also there might be instances of great souls fit in every way to adorn a higher group being born in a lower group as the result of specific transgressions in other births. Hence the notion of superiority and inferiority if it finds lodgment in the heart of any man will surely lead to his undoing, and further cause serious social dislocation and untold social misery. The burden of

service laid upon each group is in direct ratio to its place in the social hierarchy. Hence every man born in a higher group ought to feel the insecurity of his position keenly because every act of commission and omission will be duly visited with results which could not be easily averted or mitigated.

10 Hence as students of this sacred book and especially in view of the Lord's declaration in Chapter IV verse 13 we have to take the view that caste had a divine *origin* though it had a social and racial *development* and either approximated to or deviated from the Lord's plan according to the purity or impurity of each age. The whole of the Hindu race is one and entire and all fanciful and mythical divisions of it into Aryan and Dravidian Northern and Southern etc. etc. should be rejected with the contempt which such worthless speculation due to hatred of man or love of novelty amply deserve.

11 The paramount importance of the preservation of social levels in their integrity and according to the spirit of the Lord's plan is a fact that should never be forgotten. Such preservation is in the main due to woman as wife and mother. The special injunctions in our sacred books about

the purity of women are due not to a desire to lay on their shoulders a heavier burden than that placed on the shoulder of men but to a desire to preserve the graces and glories of family life and national Dharma. For such seemingly differential treatment women are paid in the golden coin of human love by father and husband and children and of divine blessing which gives them not only a sheltered life on earth but also a life of joy in heaven, nay, a wonderful power of even uplifting to the seat of blessedness the husband who might not have deserved the same by his own individual conduct and effort. The mother is the special object of adoration in Hindu society because she is the God-given guardian-angel of Dharma. The rules laid down in our sacred books about marital choice and marital duty are all inspired by this one solemn feeling of bending all human energies in the service of the preservation of *Dharma*.

12. The purity and efficiency of national life depends on the purity and efficiency of family life and the latter eventually and largely depends upon the purity and efficiency of the woman as the guardian of the racial type. Woman from the point of view of the present is the beautifier and sweetener of life. But from the point of view of

the past she is the preserver of the racial type and from the point of view of the future she is the transmitter of a great inheritance and a precious tradition

13 Since children cannot be choosing their parents the Law of God had to take up this task because if grown up men and women with their souls under the sway of *kama* (passion and desire) were allowed to do as they liked they would mate without reference to any circumstances other than their own unregulated desires and would say as one great man said that "public opinion is a strumpet and posterity is a piece of nonsense" Heredity is a great and potent factor in the welfare of individuals and races and hence it is that public opinion and law have the seeming impertinence to step between a man and his desire

14 The birth endowment of a person and his early training are a strong—in some instances an overpowering—element in the self revelation of his personality and in his development Proper marital choice in accordance with the law of God proper marital life, purity of thought and word and deed on the part of the man and woman who must not be engrossed with the idea of marital enjoyment but should rejoice in marital duties and marital



creativeness for the sake of the greater happiness of man and the greater glory of God, and proper early training of children who are the golden links of the generations, and the real joys of life, and the evidences of the virile self-renewal of the race and the God-given means of achieving racial immortality

these are the vital forces of racial life and any poison admitted there will eventually lead to racial extinction

15 The physical constitution of man is thus a product, a basis, and a force It is derived from various elements which stretch far back into the past and no one can say what sin of which predecessor may not cast its shadow on the mind and body of generations unborn It is a basis because it is through it that we have to pass beyond it शरीरमाद्य खलु धर्मसाधने It is a force because its purity or impurity has far-reaching consequences. Only God and Dharma who are eternal can watch and regulate and guide us properly and hence it is that Dharma which is the word of God is positive and emphatic on this point

16 Dr Bryce in his Romanes lecture points out that the free admixture of blood between individuals belonging to different communities and living at different levels of civilisation tends in the

long run to diminish the wealth of character and the potency of civilisation which human communities possess. The gain of the weaker community is doubtful and small the loss of the stronger community is certain and great. Surely there are means of achieving brotherhood other than mingling by marriage. The higher and truer and nobler brotherhood is a psychic feeling rather than a physical fact. The former is divine in its nature and hence beyond the fluctuations of time and space and the tyranny of greed and lust. The latter is of the earth earthy. How many children born of the same parents fly at one another's throats!!!!

17 Herbert Spencer held the view that even races at similar levels of culture but with special peculiarities of racial endowment and racial vision will suffer loss of power through unregulated intercrossing as this will unsettle the stability of the physiological equilibrium of their inherited racial endowments. Humanity has achieved great things in the course of centuries of painful travail and cannot afford to allow the momentary whims of individual passion to undo all that had been done while the individuals enjoy the benefit of all that the strivings and sufferings of millions of generations have won for their benefit and their happiness.

18. If one individual in a family goes wrong he might mend or be cast out of it, and in the last resort human life being short his capacity for mischief will have only limited scope and operation. If a family in a group goes wrong the evil will be greater but the three possibilities abovesaid apply here also. If a group in a society goes wrong the evil will be on a considerable scale but the abovesaid possibilities will apply though with less certainty. But if through the decay of faith in and loyalty to Dharma *Tamasanlana* sets in and a whole society goes wrong, it cannot right itself and untold suffering and even extinction may follow. Such communal mixture will lead to the obliteration of all the great characteristics acquired and preserved through the ages. The families composing the corrupted society will be unfit for the reincarnation of great souls awaiting embodiment. Thus obedience to the sacred law in this matter is the only means of safeguarding the interests of humanity at large.

19. Indeed, if the great evil of *Tarna-Sankara* is avoided, the minor evils corrupting family life will be set right in the course of the succeeding seven generations and the society will right itself and preserve its equilibrium despite temporary oscillations and aberrations.

20 Hence we can sum up the results of this exposition. The Hindu ideal is federation not fusion. The integrity and efficiency of society depend on the integrity and efficiency and purity of family life. The preservation of *संन्यास* (continuation of lineage) has the physical side of the continuity of generations and the higher spiritual side of the preservation of Dharma. The family is the real unit of the State. Science tells us that the permanent and happy union of man and woman softened and sweetened life, made the continuity and development of civilisation possible, and led to the psychic evolution of man. Our view is that if the purity and refinement of the family are preserved and the graces and benedictions of the *samskaras* are attained a perfect Brahmin Jnani would be born in the family and the light of sainthood in him will illuminate the world and uplift the generations preceding and following him. This is the positive side. The negative side is that *Varna Sankara* will have the various results stated above and will result in racial extinction. If we add to the impurities in past births the impurities of family corruption and social taint, who can save us? If our parentage gives us an endowment of purity and power and if the society contributes its electric currents of dynamic purity of ideals we can counteract the

evil tendencies in us and with the help of Dharma attain to the lotus feet of God

संकरो नरकायैव कुलघ्नानां कुलस्य च ।  
पतन्ति पितरो ह्येषां लुभपिण्डोदकक्रियाः ॥ ४१ ॥

दोषैरेतैः कुलघ्नानां वर्णसंकरकारकैः ।  
उत्साद्यन्ते जातिधर्माः कुलधर्माश्च शाश्वताः ॥ ४२ ॥

उत्सन्नकुलधर्माणां मनुष्याणां जनार्दन ।  
नरके नियत वासो भवतीत्यनुशुश्रुम ॥ ४३ ॥

Such confusion of births leads to hell the destroyers of the family and also the family The ancestors of such persons fall owing to deprivation of the offerings of food and water. By such sins which result in the degradation and destruction of families and which bring about confusion of castes, the eternal family virtues and duties and caste virtues and duties become extinct O Janârdana, we have heard it said that men whose family virtues and duties have become extinct will undoubtedly dwell in hell

### NOTES

1. The importance of offerings of food and water in the manner prescribed by the scriptures

is a fact that will be patent to any one who understands the Hindu scheme of life. A beautiful Sanskrit verse says—

जीवतोवाक्यं रणारस्यन्द भूरिमाजनात् ।  
गयायां पि ऽ नाथ भवेत्पुत्रस्य पुत्रता ॥

The divine beings known as *Isauradralityas* accept the food offered to the Brahmins who represent them and give nutriment in a suitable form to the ancestors in whatever embodiment they may be. It is said that there are 96 *sraddhas*

2 It may not be out of place here to say what Max Muller says about the Hindu Sraddha ceremony. He says: I deeply sympathise with your sraddha ceremony nay I wish we had something like it in our own religion. To keep alive the memory of our parents to feel their presence during the great trials of our life to be influenced by what we know they would have wished us to do, and to try to honour their name by showing ourselves not unworthy bearers of it, that is a Sraddha ceremony in which we can all partake nay ought to partake whatever our religion may be. There is a real though unseen bond of union (*tantra*) that connects us through our parents and ancestors with the great Author of all things, and the same bond

will connect ourselves through our children with the utmost distant generations. If we know that, and are constantly reminded of it by ceremonies like that of your Sraddha, we are not likely to forget that responsibility that rests on every one of us. In that sense your Sraddh is a blessing, on your parents because on yourselves, and whatever the future of your religion may be in India, I hope this communion with the spirits of your ancestors or *Pitris*, will always form an essential part of it "

3 I need hardly say that modern reformers of all degrees of conformity to reason and non-conformity to revelation (old and new ? I am speaking thus because new Dharma Sastras and Gitas etc, etc, etc, are now being sprung upon us) who give up the Sraddhas or lessen their importance in our scheme of social and spiritual life are not Hindus in fact

4. The story of Astika in the Mahabharata makes us realise clearly the position of progenitors who leave no proper descendants

5 Hence the destruction of family and caste duties, virtues and graces due to confusion of births is a serious menace to individual and social welfare and is the greatest of all foes to the spiritual

foundation of a stable social life. It must be prevented at any cost.

महो यत्त मद्दृष्टाय कर्तुं व्ययमिता वयम् ।  
यद्राज्यसुखलोभेन हन्तुं स्वजनमुद्यता ॥ ४४ ॥

Alas! Alas! we have resolved upon committing a great far reaching sin by seeking to kill our kinsmen out of greed for the pleasures of sovereignty.

यदि मामप्रतीकारमशस्त्र राक्षसाण्य ।  
धार्तराष्ट्र रणे हन्तुस्तस्मै क्षेमतर मयेत् ॥ ४५ ॥

If the armed sons of Dhritarashtra are to slay me unarmed and unresisting, that will be the higher blessing to me.

NOTES:

Arjuna's idea is that his individual suffering would be nothing in comparison with the great communal and racial evils consequent on the decimation of families and social unsettlements caused by such a war.

सजय उवाच—

पयमुक्त्वार्जुन सख्ये द्रयोपस्य उपाविशत् ।  
विसृज्य सशरं चापं शोकसविम्वमामस ॥



Sanjay said -

Having spoken thus on the battlefield, Arjuna sat down in the back seat of his car having cast aside his bow and arrows, with mind overpowered by sadness.

### NOTES

1 Such a mood of mind is natural in the case of those who though they are warriors by heredity, training, profession, and inclination, have their humaner side also developed by a self-disciplined and self-controlled ethical life

2. Arjuna's nobility of nature is shown by the grand and unique spectacle of his selflessness, even in his unworthy and *undharma* and unmanly mood of grief. His view was that the universal slaughter impending and inevitable on the battlefield will deprive his side of real happiness even if it won the war, because the kinsman whose participation in the pleasures and enjoyments of life was the really valuable element in them would be slain in the war. Not merely was there this result alone. There would be not merely appalling waste of life and the blighting of all sources of real happiness, but the whole country and society would be overwhelmed by sin. The mere

disappearance of one generation was only like the subsidence of one wave on the infinite ocean of time. The blighting of the real elements of joy in life to one generation was of limited scope and duration. But the sin that arose like a moral epidemic from the field of war was sure to leave its devastating effect on many societies and during many centuries. Nay it would have far reaching consequences not merely in regard to our successors but also in regard to our predecessors. The sin resulting from the slaughter would be of various kinds and degrees and intensities of evil consequences. There is first of all the taking away of life thence follows the extinction of families thence follows the loss of the white radiance of purity in the womanhood of the race thence follows the inevitable confusion of births and functions and duties the ancestors whose original rites are neglected or are performed by unworthy hands fall from their high estate the young men of the race have not the guidance of the wisdom of the elders of the race and the bonds of society get loosened and Adharma reigns in the place of Dharma which is the regulative principle of the higher life and a great racial type designed by God to be the fitting home for the reincarnation

of great souls is in danger of disappearance and final extinction.

3. Hence in spite of his grief and illusion, his tenderness and nobility of nature and his clarity of vision as to the far-reaching social consequences of individual actions are clear from his words. The fallacy in his argument was that he brought into his statement an obtrusion of the individualistic attitude towards life and towards the solemn tasks and duties of life, that he was obsessed by a concentration of his mind upon the consequences of actions instead of doing his work in a spirit of detachment and as an act of worship to God, that he did not realise that Duryodhana and his followers were fighting against Dharma whereas the tie of kinship is of no importance if it is weighed in the balance of the Divine Law against Dharma, that if he did not do his duty the evil consequences to him, to his ancestors, to his successors, and to society would be even greater than the consequences of slaughter in war, and that if duty was done in the right spirit the Lord who is Love as well as Law might be left to attend to the conservation and preservation of racial power and fruitfulness.

4 Some say that Arjuna was under illusion though he was full of tenderness and spoke words

## CHAPTER II

### Sankhya-Yoga

In this Chapter the Lord deals with the major as well as the minor difficulties that clouded Arjuna's faculties and unnerved and paralysed his will. As Arjuna's difficulty was fundamental in its nature, Sri Krishna also went to the root of the matter. A mere presentation of the doctrine of the blessedness of duty from its outward side would not have convinced Arjuna that his true glory and blessedness lay in his doing his duty in the proper spirit. Mere command or exhortation would not have effected that conversion of the heart without which commands and exhortations are but of limited effect, even if they be not entirely in vain. It was Arjuna's non-perception of the real nature of the soul and of the real means of realising it that was the cause of his obscurity of vision, his confusion of the real issues, and his shrinking from the call of duty. The divine physician therefore has treated the malady of the soul by attending to the root-cause as well as the symptoms, and as already explained by me in my general introduction the Lord's method is both natural and effective.

Sri Sankara points out that in the first Adhyaya we are shown that *Soka* and *Moha* etc. (grief and illusion) are the real cause of our lack of self poise in a state of perfection and bliss. Arjuna's attachment to the bodies of his relations, his mental pre-occupations with the pleasurable or painful results of his actions and his obtrusion of the little self into the concerns of life resulted in his giving up his God-given duty and trying to take up the duty of an ascetic and a monk. In Sri Sankara's words

तथा य एवमग्रामिनीं शास्त्रमोहादिदोषाविश्रवतसो स्वभावत एव  
स्वप्नमपरित्यागः प्रतिविद्धत्वा च न्यात् । स्वधर्मे प्रवृत्तानामपि तेषां  
साधनं क्षयार्थीनां प्रवृत्तिः । अज्ञानिगुणविशेषैव साहचर्यं च भवति ।

Hence the Lord teaches the true nature of the soul and the means of realising the same.

In Sri Yamunacharya's *Gitartha Sanjraha* the lessons of this Adhyaya are summed up thus:

निष्कारमासक्त्यर्थेहागोचरा साध्ययोगधी ।

द्वितीय स्थित्यर्थतत्त्वा प्रोक्ता तन्माह्वयन्तये ॥

(For dispelling his illusion there is stated in the second Chapter the immortality of the soul, the twin paths of knowledge and action based on the doing of duty in a spirit of detachment and the state of the man of self poised and self possessed soul.)

संजय उवाच

तं तथा कृपयाविष्टमश्रुपूर्णाकुलेक्षणम् ।

विषीदन्तमिदं वाक्यमुवाच मधुसूदनः ॥ १ ॥

Sanjaya said .

To him thus overcome by pity, with vision obscured by brimming and hurting tears, and full of sorrow, Madhusoodana spoke these words.

### NOTES

1. Some say that Sanjaya said the above words to prevent Dhritarashtra from rejoicing that thus his sons would get an easy victory and achieve the triumph of evil in the world But we must remember that this episode occurs after the fall of Bhishma as stated already by me

2. कृपया-- The tenderness of Arjuna was a selfish feeling and not a divinely unselfish feeling. He was thinking that he would lose all the possibilities of real joy in life by the slaughter of his kith and kin. His feeling was not that feeling of divine love which has no thought of self and desires only to wipe out the tears of others and dower them with supreme happiness. It was after all कृपा and not दया

3. कृपयाविष्टं, This shows that it dominated him. It is treated as an active agent and he is

described in the accusative case Madhusoodana says:

मज्जुनस्य कर्मस्य रूपावाप्य कृतस्य वेदता तस्या आगन्तुकत्वं  
भूयस्तम् ।

१ विषीदस्त विपाद प्राप्नुवन्त Here विपाद is the object and the word makes it clear that the grief was an intruder and not a real element.

अत्र विपादस्य कर्मस्तेनाजुनस्य कर्तृत्वेन तस्यागन्तुकत्वं सूचितम् ।  
श्री भगवानुवाच—

कुतस्था कम्बलमिव विपमे समुपस्थितम् ।  
मनार्यं दुष्टमस्य गम्य मकीर्तिकरमर्जुन ॥ २ ॥

The Lord said—

O Arjuna whence has come upon you at this inopportune moment this weakness of dejection—which is never allowed by the high souled ones, which bars the path to heaven, and which will destroy your fair name

#### NOTES

1 *Bhagavan* means the Lord possessed of the fullness of the six auspicious qualities—the Omniscent and the Omnipotent.

ऐश्वर्यस्य समस्तस्य धनस्य यशसः प्रियः ।

नेराग्यश्चाय मोक्षस्य वर्णा भग इतीदृशः ॥

उत्पत्तिं च विनाशं च भूतानामागतिं गतिम् ।  
वेति विद्यामविद्यां च स वाच्यो भगवानिति ॥

2 कश्मल (dirt) is used in contrast with अर्जुन (white) How can there be any dirty spot in a nature of such white and spotless purity? Arjuna says to Prince Uttara about himself and his stainless purity of action

पृथिव्या चतुरन्तायां वर्णो मे दुर्लभः समः ।  
करोमि कर्म शुद्धं च तेन मामर्जुन विदुः ॥

3 The Lord says that Arjuna's कृपा instead of being praiseworthy and meritorious is ignoble, heaven-barring, and reputation-destroying As Madhusoodana tersely puts it,

तथा च मोक्षकामैः स्वर्गकामैः कीर्तिकामैश्च वर्जनीयम् ।

क्लैव्यं मां स गमः पार्थ नैनस्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।

शुद्धं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परंतप ॥ ३ ॥

Do not get into this state of impotence, O Partha. It doth not befit thee, Shake off this low faint-heartedness, and rise, O vanquisher of foes.

### NOTES

1 क्लैव्य Probably the Lord tells him in a banter that though he assumed the disguise of a



eunuch in Viratā's court he must not be a eunuch in fact in the presence of a great crisis.

2. पाप Kunti had sent him a message to behave like a true Kshatriya. The word probably refers to it and suggests that he should carry out his mother's command.

3. The Lord refers in this verse to Arjuna's statement न च शक्यमवस्थातु भ्रमतीव च मे मनः। He asks him to call to mind his prowess which enabled him to vanquish his foes and meet in battle Maheswara Himself.

4. Thus the Lord appeals first to Arjuna's chivalry and prowess because an appeal to a man's natural inclination is the best means of overcoming a strange temporary depression.

अर्जुन उवाच—

कथं भीष्ममहं सख्ये द्रोणं च मधुसूदन ।  
 इषुभिः प्रतियोत्स्यामि पूजार्हाय तिसूदन ॥ ४ ॥

Arjuna said —

How, O Madhusoodana shall I attack with arrows in battle Bhishma and Drona who are worthy of my worship, Oh slayer of foes !

## NOTES

1 Here Arjuna states as his strongest ground the sin of attacking those worthy of reverence, and places in the background the doubtfulness of victory in battle, the loss of life's enjoyments through the slaughter of kindred, etc. How shall I, he says, shower arrows on them on whom I should shower the sweetest flowers of reverence and adoration? Is not irreverence for elders a great sin, as is stated in the verse *युं हुकृत्य त्वं ह्य* etc ?

युक्नुवत्वा हि महानुभावान्

श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्षमपीह लोके ।

दत्तार्थकामास्तु युक्नुनिहैव

भुञ्जीय मोगान् रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् ॥ ५ ॥

It is far better in this world to eat what is got by begging without killing our honoured and high-souled elders. By slaying these elders who are attached as yet to worldly enjoyments, we should taste here alone enjoyments vitiated by the shedding of blood.

## NOTES

1. Arjuna says that wading through slaughter to a throne and shutting the gates of mercy on

mankind leads to ill consequences here and hereafter

2 This verse is an answer to a possible argument that the elders have transgressed their bounds of duty and cannot be treated with the reverence due to them if they were in the right path. It is said in the Ramayana

पुरारप्यवशिष्टस्य कार्यकायमवानत ।  
उत्पन्नप्रातिपन्नस्य परिक्षागो विधीयते ॥

But Arjuna says that by not punishing elders by attack we could ensure enjoyment of a life in heaven whereas by attacking them we get only a bloodstained sovereignty and nothing more

3 The second half of the stanza deals with an assumed objection Bhishma had once said that he was fettered to the unjust cause of Duryodhana by being his state servant and accepting remuneration for his service. He had said

अर्थस्य पुरुषो दास दासस्त्वर्थो न कस्यचित् ।  
इति सत्यं महाराज वदोऽस्म्यर्थेन कौरवे ॥

But Arjuna says that in spite of this the elders were his superiors in every way and should not be attacked by him

4. Or अर्थकामान् may be taken as qualifying भोगान्. Then the verse will mean By slaying these

elders, we should taste here alone enjoyments consisting of wealth and pleasure dipped in blood " This interpretation obviates the necessity of giving a reason for calling the elders अर्थकामान् after having described them as महानुभावान् in the first half of the stanza

5 श्रेय. This word is used to mean the higher raptures of the spirit as opposed to the lower enjoyments of the senses (प्रेय) In the Kathopanishad it is stated

अन्यच्छ्रेयोऽन्यदुतैव प्रेयस्ते उभे नानार्थे पुरुष सिनीत । तयोः श्रेय आददानस्य साधुर्भवति हीयतेऽर्थाव्य उ प्रेयो वृणीते ।

श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्यमेतस्त्रौ सपरीत्य विविनक्ति धीरः । श्रेयो हि धीरोऽभिप्रेयसो वृणीते प्रेयो मन्दो योगक्षेमावृणीते ।

6 हिमहानुभावान् explained also as one word.

हिमं जाज्यमपहन्तीति हिमहा आदित्योऽभिर्वा तस्येव अनुभाव-  
सामर्थ्यं येषा तान् ॥

This means 'those whose splendour and glory and power are like those of the Sun '

न चैतद्विन्नः कतरन्नो गरीयो

यद्वा जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयुः ।

यानेव हत्वा न जिजीविषामः

तेऽवस्थिता प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्राः ॥ ६ ॥

Nor do we know which is the better for us—that we conquer them or that they conquer us. The sons of Dhritarashtra after killing whom we cannot care to live, are arrayed against us in mortal battle.

### NOTES.

1 Some take the first line of the verse as asking who is the stronger among us—they or we? अथयस्यौ हि रदयत युद्धं जयपराजयौ says the Ramayana. Others take it as asking which is better—mendicancy where there is no taking of life or war which is our duty? Arjuna however seems to be revolving in his mind the relative value of victory and defeat. He thinks that by victory he will gain Artha and Kama and lose Dharma and Moksha besides losing his kith and kin—a circumstance which will poison his enjoyment of Artha and Kama.

2 It is hence,—so thinks Arjuna—better far to retire from war and beg his food than to fight the battle and reap such disastrous consequences. Perhaps he had in mind the truth contained in the verse which says that great is even the trifle earned without causing harm to others and without seeking the favour of bad men and without overworking oneself.

अकृत्वा परसतापं अमत्वा खलमन्दिरम् ।

अक्लेशयित्वा चात्मानं यदप्यमपि तद्ब्रु ॥

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभावः

पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मसंमूढचेताः ।

यच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे

शिष्यस्तेऽहं शायि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् ॥ ७ ॥

My natural tendency is clouded by faintness of heart and weakness of will, and my mind is confused in regard to my duty. I ask thee for light. Tell me decisively which is the auspicious path. I am thy disciple; to me, who have thrown myself at thy feet seeking grace, reveal the truth and command me as to what I shall do.

### NOTES

1 Madhusoodana Sarasvati points out how Arjuna has shown himself as one who had acquired *sama*, *dama* etc. the 'fourfold pre-requisite for spiritual illumination called साधनचतुष्टय

He says

‘न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे’ इति नित्यानित्यवस्तु-  
विवेको दर्शितः, ‘न काङ्क्षे विजयं कृष्ण’ इत्यत्र ऐहिकफलविरागः,  
‘अपि त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य हेतोः’ इत्यत्र पारलौकिकफलविरागः, ‘नरके  
नियतं वासः’ इत्यत्र स्थूलदेहातिरिक्त आत्मा, ‘किं नो राज्येन’ इति

आत्मातत्त्वार्थना समः, 'किं भोगे' इति दम 'यद्यप्यते न पश्यन्ति' इत्यत्र निर्लोभता, 'तमे क्षमतरं भवति' इति अत्र तितिक्षा, इति त्रय व्याख्यासार्थः सत्यन्यायप्रपन्नसूचनम् । आर्त्तितरभ्याम् प्रया भोगदुःक्षमपि' इत्यत्र मिष्टाचारोपलक्षितः मन्याय प्रतिपादितः । गुरुस्य दनमिशानां प्रतिपादते, समधिगतधरारोपस्य अतिधरा निर्भिन्नश्च विभिन्नदुःखसमस्तैश्च विद्यामद्वयार्थकारात् ।

2. I have already shown how *regas* means the auspicious path leading to God love and God realisation the only medicine for all the ills of life

3. कृपण This word is used to describe a miser a man in mental distress, a slave. The word is used by Arjuna to show how he is doling over the fleeting treasure of family affections how his mind is tossed on the seas of irresolution by the storms of doubt and how he is a slave to the ties of blood. We should remember also that in the Upanishads a कृपण is defined as one who dies without having attained God realisation

'यो वा एतद्वरं गम्यादित्वात्मातोकाद्यैति स कृपणः'

says Scripture It is this that has obscured Arjuna's vision (२५भा५) If that is removed his true nature will shine forth

4. विप्य — True knowledge will come only to a humble disciple and from a true Guru. See Gita IV 34

5 प्रपन्न—The nature of Prapatti or शरणागति.  
is thus stated

आनुकूल्यस्य सकल्प. प्रातिकूल्यस्य वर्जनम् ।  
रक्षिष्यतीति विश्वास गोप्तृत्ववरण तथा ॥  
आत्मनिक्षेपकार्पण्ये षडङ्गा शरणागति ।

न हि प्रपश्यामि ममापनुद्या-  
यच्छोकमुच्छ्रोपणमिन्द्रियाणाम् ।  
अवाप्य भूमावसपत्नमृद्धं  
राज्यं सुराणामपि चाधिपत्यम् ॥ ८ ॥

Verily I do not see what will remove this anguish that withers up my senses, even if I should attain unchallenged sovereignty on earth or even the rulership over Gods.

### NOTES

1 What is the good of blessings here or in heaven to him whose soul is ill at ease ? What profiteth it a man if he wins the whole world and loses his soul ? Such is Arjuna's anguished feeling. Even the joys of heaven end after a time

‘तद्यथेह कर्मचितो लोक क्षीयत एवमेवामुत्र पुण्यचितो लोक. क्षीयते’ says Scripture

2. He prays therefore to be led across the Slough of despond to the City beautiful.



‘गाङ्गे भगव पाशामि त मा भगवान् पादस्य पार तारयतु ।—  
says Scripture

3. This verse is his answer to the Lord's words धृष्टकेतुर्विषयः क्षत्रयात्तु परतः ।

सञ्जय उवाच—

एवमुक्त्वा हृषीकेश गुडाकेश परतः ।

त योस्य इति गोविन्दमुक्त्वा तूर्णं यमूय ह ॥ १० ॥

Sanjay said —

Having thus advanced Bhishmaka's Gadaaka the conqueror of his foes, said to Govinda I shall not fight and then became silent

#### NOTES

1. But it was a silence that awaited illumination and prayed for it as he did not go away from the field of battle.

2. Thus in this verse he turns for help to his guru the guru of all gurus the Adi Guru Sri Narayana himself. The disciple must preserve his individuality and at the same time humbly ask for illumination using his individuality to present all his difficulties to the teacher and get them solved. This was Arjuna's method.

तमुवाच हृषीकेशः प्रहसन्निय भारत ।

सेनयागम रोमघ्ने क्षिपीदन्तमिदं पचः ॥ १० ॥

Then Hrishikesa, with an apparent smile on his lips, spoke O Bharata, these words to him who was over-whelmed by grief in the midst of both the armies

### NOTES

1 अहसन् इव This is understood in various senses Nilakantha takes it to mean that the Lord smiled as Arjuna spoke as if he were wise though he was not wise Madhusoodana says that the Lord wanted to make Arjuna feel ashamed of his inopportune words and actions and qualifies this remark by saying that this was only a prelude to his instruction Dhanapati takes it to mean that it was a reassuring smile implying that he was prepared to instruct and bless him Others say that the smile shows the good temper of the born teacher and the indication of the teacher's mastery over his subject Sridhara says that अहसन् — इव अहसन्-  
मुखः सन् The lips and the eyes are the most expressive portions of a beautiful face That is why the poets and saints praise the Lord's अहसन्मुखः and नन्दित Mookakavi has devoted 100 verses to each of them The words show that the Lord was then in his benignant (अहसन्) aspect The beauty of his divine smile showed his अहसन् He was ready to shower His grace अहसन् on Arjuna, his disciple and devotee

2. संनयोऽभयोमय may qualify also उवाच This will show that the Lord in His abundance of grace and eagerness to uplift and save ignored the unsuitability of the place for the giving of His gospel.

धीमनया नुपाच—

अशोभ्यानन्वशोचस्य प्रज्ञायाशंस्य भावसे ।

गतासूनमतासूय नाशुचोचिन्ति पण्डिताः ॥ ११ ॥

The Lord said —

Thou grieveest for those that should not be grieved for and yet thou speakest words of seeming wisdom. The really wise who have attained the knowledge of the soul do not grieve for the living or for the dead

### NOTES

1. Arjuna's grief and illusion have led to his abandoning his plain duty and trying to do what is not his duty but is the duty of an ascetic. So long as grief and illusion haunt us they would mislead us away from the path of duty and would make us work with motives even if we are in the path of duty. Hence in this verse the Lord goes to the basic evils and removes them. The teaching of Arjuna was merely an occasion to give the blessed gospel to all the world. Sri Sankaracharya says

further that only jnana is the means to liberation.

2 Nilakantha speaks of the twenty verses beginning with this verse thus ब्रह्मविद्यासूत्रभूतैः विंशत्या श्लोकैः । He says that Arjuna had two illusions

i That the soul was destroyed when the body was killed

ii That his duty of righteous war was an *adharma*. By these twenty verses the first illusion was removed. Madhusoodana thinks that the first illusion was shared by Arjuna with the rest of mankind and that the second illusion was peculiar to himself. There is no room for grief as the soul is eternal

3. अशोक्यान् This means that he grieved in respect of that which, being eternal, should not be grieved for. The Sruti says. जीवापेतं वाव किलेदं भ्रियते नाजीवो म्रियते ।

4. ब्रह्मवादांश्च Some take it to mean that Arjuna spoke words of wisdom but did not act wisely Others take it to mean that what he said was only seemingly wise. Madhusoodana splits up the word into ब्रह्मा+अवादांश्च (words which the wise would not utter) Both the meanings express two different aspects of the same thing

5 गतासून् Sri Ramanuja takes this to mean bodies भूतासून् च Sri Ramanuja takes this to mean souls.

This lays stress on the fact that the body is mortal and not worth grieving for and that the soul is immortal and not to be grieved for at all  
उत्तमो मानुषो देहो दहिना क्षणमहुर ।

6 पण्डिता Those learned in the science of the soul, Sri Sankaracharya says पण्डा भास्माविषया बुद्धि येषां देहि पण्डिता ।

7 Sri Madhwa takes च in भगतासून् to mean स्व Then the verse would mean that just as no one grieves for the living so no one should grieve for the dead knowing the eternal nature of the soul

न स्येवाह आतु नास न त्व नेमे जनाधिपाः ।

न वैद्य न भविष्याम सर्वे ययमत ५२५ ॥ १२ ॥

Never was there a time when I and you and these kings were not. Neither shall there be a time when all of us shall cease to be

### NOTES

1 This is a telling statement about the soul being different from the body and being immortal. The body had a time when it was not, and there

will be a time when it will not be    The nature of the soul is quite different.

2    The Lord gives the instance of God for purposes of comparison and shows that the human soul is eternal in the same sense as the Oversoul.

3.    The Dwaita and the Vishistadwaita schools of thought rely on this verse as proving the multiplicity of souls and their separateness from God, as God, Arjuna, and the kings are referred to separately. But the context shows that the Lord is teaching here the eternity of the soul and its separateness from the body and not with the relations between the soul and the Oversoul. I shall deal later on with the inter-relatedness of the three schools of thought and state what, in my humble opinion, are the real and apparent points of difference between them and show that the present attempts to demonstrate their utter irreconcilableness have a basis of prejudice rather than a basis of reason or fact.

4.    Sri Sankaracharya says that the plural is used here to show that the seeming difference is due to difference of bodies    देहभेदादुत्तरा बहुवचनं नात्मभेदाभिप्रायेण ।

5    If the verse is to be taken literally so as to justify the affirmation that the souls are sepa-

rate can we argue logically and say that the soldiers have no souls because they are omitted in the verse while the leaders are mentioned and that the Lord is in no sense superior to us as He and the souls are mentioned as being alike? The Lord is dealing with the truth of things beginning from Arjuna's point of view and we find a natural development of ideas throughout the Chapter

6 Mr C M Palmanabhachariar asks Why should not the Lord say that all are one and that there is no duality? Was He deficient in expression and did He teach dualism when He meant monism and leave Arjuna to twist His words and distil or evolve monism out of them? The fact is that the Lord did not come into the world to propound this or that school of philosophy but to give us a full unitive vision of truth. It is only our mental prejudice that incites us to make each statement sing to the tune of our preconceived views

7 One argument advanced against the adwaitist position is that if all are one how could there be teacher teaching and pupil? All these exist in the phenomenal plane though not in the noumenon Does the Advaiti deny the efficacy of scripture or the grace and omnipotence of the Lord? Indeed he says ईश्वरात्मनोऽद्वैतं पुंसामद्वैतपाथना

Only through the *Mahavakyopadesa* by God does Mukti come. Only he affirms that there is a luminous blessed counterpart of the state of deep sleep where all elements of diverseness are merged in *Satchidananda* just as the followers of the other schools of thought affirm that there is a luminous blessed counterpart of the variegated diverseness of the world of our waking moments, in which death the vanquisher of bodies has no power over the realm of pure souls living in the radiance of the smile of the Eternal Lover and Beloved.

8 In fact many of the arguments and counter-arguments advanced on both sides have a basis of verbal difference and not a difference of thought. Sri Ramanuja asks, if the soul is the image and reflection of the Oversoul, would any one be so foolish to hold speech with his own image for the purpose of teaching? This is straining the conception of the image too far. In the world of phenomena there are elements of likeness and elements of difference between God and the human soul. The likeness is in the possession of चैतन्य. The unlikeness is in the infiniteness of love and wisdom in God's case and in the finiteness of love and wisdom in our case. In the case of the image of our body in a mirror, does either the body or the image



possess any चेतन्य (consciousness)? Does it follow that because no one will teach an image and no image can benefit by teaching, the Lord cannot teach the human soul and the human soul cannot be taught by Him?

देहि नोऽस्मिभ्यधा वदस्व कीमदधीयन् जरा ।  
तथा ब्रह्मन्तराप्तिर्धरिस्तत्र न मुच्यति ॥ १३ ॥

As the soul has in this same body the states of childhood, youth, and old age even so it gets another embodiment. The wise have no illusions in this matter.

### NOTES.

1 This is a very important verse and hence this is the proper occasion for the consideration of the nature and excellences of the Indian doctrines of the immortality of the soul and of the reincarnation or transmigration of the soul. Some religions teach transmigration but not immortality others teach immortality but not transmigration and yet others recognise and teach both but not the soul's *Sachidananda swarupa*, i. e. its nature as existence and knowledge and bliss. Our religion with its full unitive vision of truth has taught us all these three blessed truths.

2 Sri Sankaracharya says that this verse shows by reasoning the truth of the immortality of the soul as stated in the previous verse

3 देहिन. The word itself shows that the soul is the lord of the body and that the body is its object of ownership

4. The singular in देहिनः is explained by some Advaitic commentators as showing that there is no plurality of souls just as the plurals used in the previous verse are explained by some Vishishtadvaitic commentators as showing the plurality of souls. Both the attempts are due to misplaced and misdirected zeal. This is not the context dealing with the Oversoul and its relation with the soul. That portion of the doctrine comes later. Here the Lord combats Arjuna's initial and basic misconception in regard to the nature of the soul

5 Sri Madhusoodana points out that the Lokayatikas say that there is no soul apart from the body, that even in ordinary parlance we say, "I am stout" or "I am fair" indicating thereby that the soul and the body are not separate, that we talk of Devadatta's death and not the death of Devadatta's body, that hence doubts arise as to the separateness of the soul and the body and as to the certainty of the soul not dying with the body, and

that hence the Lord has given us the truth contained in this verse to dispel such doubts

8 The Lord has given in this verse one of the most telling proofs of the separateness of the soul from the body and of the certainty of its not dying with the body. The body of a child the body of the same child as youth and the body of the same child as an old man appear to all as utterly separate and diverse. Yet the man himself realises that he is the same and can never be convinced to the contrary despite what his images, or photographs, or portraits may show or what his friends and observers may say. The three states (अवस्थात्रय) of childhood youth and old age are non simultaneous and contrary to one another (परस्परविरोध). But the same personality feels 'I was the son of Devadatta. I am now the father of Yajnadatta.' If the sense of personality in the body of the child was a necessary result or effect or even concomitant of that state of childhood, there could not be this प्रत्यभिज्ञा or awareness of identity of personality. That sense of personality would have made room for an utterly different sense of personality appropriate to the body of youth or to the body of old age. There cannot be the link of memory if there is diverseness of

personalities, any more than I can remember what you experience. Can you eat sugar and I revive the memory of its taste in me? Hence this telling illustration brings home to our minds with all the emphatic power of self-revelation the great truth of the separateness of the soul from the body, and its continuity and immortality as opposed to the disconnectedness and mortality of bodies. A new body should not create doubts in our minds about the soul's immortality any more than the diverse bodies of childhood, youth, and old age can cause such a doubt in our minds.

7 Let us now pursue the investigation of the nature of the soul further. The Lord himself in the 22nd stanza gives us the telling illustration of the casting off of old clothes and the wearing of new and different garments to enable us to realise the truth of the immortality of the soul and its permanence amidst the diversity of impermanent bodies. In the *Santi Parva* of the *Mahabharata* we have the equally forcible illustration of a man giving up one rented house and taking up another.

यथा हि पुरुषः शाला पुनः सप्रविशेन्नवाम् ।

एवं जीवः शरीराणि तानि तानि प्रपद्यते ॥

देहान्पुराणानुत्सृज्य नवान्सप्रतिपद्यते ॥

8 The unity of Self consciousness (प्रत्यभिज्ञा) being thus indisputable, the taking on of a fresh embodiment after death can cause no breach in its continuity any more than the occupation of a new house or wearing of a new cloth or the passing from childhood to youth and from youth to old age can cause such breach

9 There are some religions that declare the post-existence of the soul but not its pre-existence. If the line has thus a forward continuity despite the shadow of death what reason is there for denying its continuity backward, despite the shadow of birth? The line of consciousness that is revealed in this birth is that luminous portion between the shadow point of birth and the shadow point of death. Hence it is that Shakespeare declares that "our little life is rounded with a sleep". If there is a waking beyond the sleep of death why was there not a waking beyond the sleep of birth? It is irrational to postulate the post-existence of the soul and deny its pre-existence

10 The interrogation of Death as the holder of the key of life was made for all time and for the benefit of the world for ever by Nachiketas and the *Kathopanishad* has given us the precious

answer Nachiketas pressed Yama for an answer and said.

देवैरत्रापि विचिकित्सितं किल  
 त्वं च मृत्यो यन्न सुविज्ञेयमात्म ।  
 वक्ता चास्य त्वाद्गन्धो न लभ्यो  
 नान्यो वरस्तुल्य एतस्य कश्चित् ॥

Yama replies नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया and then declares in golden words

अशरीरं शरीरेष्वनवस्थेष्ववस्थितम् ।  
 महान्तं विभुमात्मानं मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥

The nature of the soul and the means of the attainment of self-realisation are then declared by Yama in words that contain the quintessence of beauty and wisdom

11 What do we see in the world of nature? Insentientcy Now a mere combination of insentient elements can never produce sentientcy Hence the sentient soul cannot be a multiplicity but is a unity, cannot be an effect but is a cause The insentient cosmos is in a state of perpetual flux but the unitive sentient entity of soul is unchanging and eternal

12 I shall now deal with the other proofs of the immortality of the soul In the world of sen-

tiency we have an infinite variety of aptitudes and endowments and powers. If life is the gift of a new and special act of creation by God or if it is the accidental result of a fortuitous combination of atoms, why should not all men have similar powers of lives etc. / He who in the unscientific language of the West which boasts itself on its scientific greatness is called a prodigy is merely one who has by intensity of effort attained great powers in other births and brings those *Vidyas* with him trailing clouds of glory as he comes. In the *Kumarsambhava* Canto I the greatest poet of India shows this in a beautiful verse.

तं ह्यमाताः धरतीं गङ्गां  
महीर्षिं नक्षत्रात्मभाषः ।  
स्थितोऽपदेद्यामुपदेवता  
प्रपेदिरे प्राचनवन्मविद्या ॥

13 Let us now take up the method of the analysis of our daily consciousness—the method is called the method of *अन्वयव्यतिरेक* (similarity and difference). Every day we pass through the three *avasthas* (states of consciousness) known as *जाग्रत*, *सुप्त*, and *सुषुप्ति* (the waking state the state of dream, and the state of deep sleep). Each is marked off from the next by a well marked line

of difference, and the realm of each excludes the realms of the others. But disparate and disconnected as they are, there is a unifying principle of consciousness which by its inter-linkings of experience and memory connects them like an all-embracing sea connecting the disconnected islands of the ocean. On waking up after deep sleep the sleeper says सुखमहमस्वाप्स न किञ्चिदवेदिषम् (I slept happily and I knew nothing then). Thus the ever-wakeful witness साक्षी is there watching the dance of life in the waking state, the reflex activity of the mind in the dreamful state, and the sheath of deep nescience that soothes and renews the tired elements of mind and body in the state of deep sleep. Hence it is clear that there is a principle in man that is separate from the daily procession of the three states. Life is a mere succession of days. Therefore if the soul is beyond the limitations of the day it is equally beyond the limitations of life and death. In the famous पञ्चदशी Sri Vidyaranya says well.

शब्दस्पर्शादयो वेद्या वैचित्र्याज्जागरे पृथक् ।

ततो विभक्ता तत्संविदैकरूप्यान् मिथ्यते ॥

तथा स्वप्नेऽत्र वेद्यं तु न स्थिर जागरे स्थिरम् ।

तद्भेदोऽतस्तयोः संविदैकरूपा न मिथ्यते ॥



सुतोत्पितस्य सौप्ततमो बोधो मयस्मृतिः ।  
 सा चाबुद्धविषयावबुद्धं तत्तदा तम ॥  
 स बोधा विषयाद्विभो न बोधात्समभोधवत् ।  
 एष स्थानत्रयेऽप्यत्र सचित्तद्विनिान्तरे ॥  
 मासाभ्युगच्छन्त्येव गतागम्येभ्यनकथा ।  
 बोदेति नास्तमस्यत्र सविदेया स्वयम्रमा ॥

14 Again it is a part of the human experience that vague memories of past births cast their shadow or radiance athwart the present state of our being. Keen observers who do not go through life as a mere place of business or of amusement have realised and recorded this fact again and again. The most supremely beautiful statement of this fact is that which occurs in Kalidasa's world famous stanza in *Sakuntala*

रम्भाणि वीक्ष्य मधुराक्ष विश्रम्य चन्दान्  
 पर्युत्सुको भवति वत्सुखितोऽपि जन्तुः ।  
 तथेतदा स्मरति नूनमभोधपूर्वं  
 भावस्थिराणि जननान्तरसौदृशानि ॥

I may mention here a few famous passages in English poetry bearing on this vital and precious truth

Wordsworth says.

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting

The soul that rises with us, our life's star  
 Hath had elsewhere its setting  
 And cometh from afar,  
 Not in entire forgetfulness  
 Nor in utter nakedness  
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come "

Tennyson says in *In memoriam*

"The days have vanished, tone and tint,  
 And yet perhaps the boarding sense  
 Gives out at times, he knows not whence,  
 A little flash, a mystic hint "

In one of the most beautiful sonnets in the sonnet-sequence entitled *The House of Life* D G Rossetti says

"O born with me somewhere that men forget  
 And though in years of sight and sound unmet  
 Known for my soul's birth-partner well enough."

15 In the Brahma Sutras we have the 54th Sutra in Adhyaya III Pada III which has given us the last and final and perfect word on this topic.

व्यतिरेकस्तद्भावाभावित्वान्न तूपलब्धिवत् ।

Sri Sankaracharya has given us a very subtle and convincing piece of reasoning in his famous *bhashya* on this sutra. If by reason of the fact that the faculties of the soul are visible only during the

existence of the body you say that they are only effects and resultant of physical causes then the same body remains even after death. The cause being there, the effect must be there even after death if your theory of cause and effect be true. Form etc are physical qualities (द्रव्यगुण) They are sensed equally well during life as well as after death. If the soul and its faculties be physical qualities like form etc why are they not realised as existent even after death? Further the purely physical qualities are capable of being sensed by others. Is any one able to sense another's *chaitanya* or memory etc? Again as the *Itim Dharma*s are not realisable after death though they are realised during life we must conclude that they are not physical results but only temporary concomitants. Does the mere fact that they exist while the body exists justify us in concluding that they cannot exist when this body ceases to exist? No. They can attach themselves to another body. Hence there is no justification for claiming for the opposite hypothesis the dignity of a proven truth. We may well ask those who assert that consciousness is only a resultant of the physical elements, how can consciousness be a quality of the elements which are the objects of consciousness? How can the subject be a resultant of the object? If conscious-

ness be a result of physical causes it cannot in the nature of things be aware of them. How can anything act upon itself? स्वात्मनि क्रियाविरोधात्. Fire cannot burn itself though it can burn other things. No circus performer can ever stand on his own shoulders. It is impossible that the resultant of physical causes can be conscious of the causes or of their other physical effects. Can one form be aware of another? Can one sound recognise other sounds? Can sugar be conscious of the sweetness of honey or even of its own sweetness? The existence of a subjective consciousness to which the material elements and their products are objects leads to the inevitable conclusion that they are utterly separate and divergent from it. The two entities are as far apart as light and darkness. तमःप्रकाशवत् विदुस्त्वमावयोः is the description that we have of them in the famous Adhyasa Bhashya of Sri Sankaracharya. We realise that our self is consciousness. Hence it must be separate from the body. It is permanent because its character and content are same and uniform. नित्यत्वं चोपलब्धे-  
 देहस्यार्थः. The consciousness that the same personality saw and felt in a particular way before demonstrates this clearly. The link of memory is possible only because of this identity of consciousness (प्रत्यभिज्ञा). The argument that utterly demer-

then the theory that consciousness is a physical product or resultant is thus stated by Sri Sanvara charya. We have consciousness in action when the body exists and when lamp etc. are existing. For instance we see an object when we use our eyes and when there is a lamp to illumine the object. Are we therefore to say that consciousness is an attribute of the body? We may with equal reason say that because perception takes place when there is a lamp and does not take place when there is no lamp it is an attribute of the lamp. Co-existence is no ground for concluding in favour of a relation of cause and effect. As a matter of fact the co-operation of the body is not necessary for perception. In a state of dream we have manifoldness of perception without the co-operation of the body. Hence it is clear that the soul is separate from the body and is not a resultant or effect of physical causes and has a different origin, life, and destiny from the body which is its physical sheath.

18 The proofs of man's survival of bodily death as accumulated by psychic research societies are also acceptable in this connection though they throw no light on the real nature of the soul. In the case of such proofs we must remember that

the mental body and in many cases also an invisible physical body exist, and the Western confusion of thought about this subtle physical sheath being the soul is an error to be avoided. But they are of value as demolishing the ancient scientific superstition that there was and could be no entity separate from the physical body and surviving the destruction of the latter.

17 If we may take the universal speech of humanity as embodying a universal concept of the human mind, we can well refer to such words as "This is my body," "My mind feels etc. as showing affirmations of the fundamental truth of the separateness of the soul.

18 It is also pointed out that the yearning for an eternity of existence is itself a proof of the essential and inalienable immortality of the soul and of its true nature as eternal love and bliss. Sri Vidyanaraya says in his famous Panchadasi

इयमात्मा परानन्दः परब्रह्मस्यदं यतः ।

मा न भूय हि भूयासमिति प्रेमात्मनीक्ष्यते ॥

I may refer here also to Tennyson's famous lines in *The Two Voices* and in *In Memoriam*

"Who forged that other influence,

That heat of inward evidence  
 By which he doubts against the sense"  
(The Poet's)

A warmth within the breast would melt  
 The freezing reason's colder part  
 And like a man in wrath the heart  
 Stood up and answered "I have felt."  
(In Memoriam)

19 Again the revelation of the moral Law in the heart as an eternal truth is of the very stuff of our being. The eternal moral law would have no basis or solidity or sanction unless the soul is immortal. Fennyaon says well about this

The wages of sin is death    if the wages of virtue  
be dust  
 Would she have the heart to endure for the life of  
the worm and the fly?  
 She desires no tales of the blest    quiet seats of the  
just,  
 To rest in a golden grove or to bask in summer  
sky  
 Give her the wages of going on and not to die.

20 Again the soul comprehends the infinities of time, space and causation, and realizes the joy of infinite love and renunciation and bliss. Only an

entity which is eternal can comprehend and realise such infinities.

21. I may mention also a few other valuable philosophical considerations. The subject (ego) must learn its true nature only by introspective analysis and cannot learn it by any other analysis. As Hugo Munsterberg says in *The Eternal Life* ; "No science of the universe can say anything about ourselves who make the sciences . . . To ask what time the real personality itself fills is not more reasonable than to ask whether the will is round or square, how many pounds it weighs, and what its colour may be . . . . The real personality, the subject of will and thought, is not an object in time as it is itself the condition of time . . . . From the highest point of view thousands of years may be grasped in one act " Mr Josiah Royce points out in his book on *The Conception of Immortality* that personality is purposive, that the fulfilment of purpose cannot be in one life between birth and death, that personality transcends the sense, and that these facts prove the truth of the immortality of the soul. In short what is infinite must be eternal and cannot begin in time as an act of creation, for what begins in time must end in time.



22. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul though not exactly in the form of the Hindu doctrine of reincarnation has been a universal belief at all times and amongst all races of men. The ancient Hebrews Egyptians and Chaldeans held the belief but they thought that the soul was separate from the body but not independent of it and could not survive the death of the body, and hence the customs of burial and mummification came into existence. Among the Aryans it was always believed that the soul was entirely different from the body and had pre-existence and will have post-existence and hence arose the custom of cremation.

23. The doctrine of reincarnation alone can satisfactorily account for the inequalities of life and harmonise God's Justice and God's Mercy and give proper scope for the inevitable law of cause and effect in the realm of human action. Also, the fear of death and the instinct for suckling which new born babies have can be explained only on that basis. The doctrine is the only rational theory that explains the facts of life as we realise them by experience.

24. But after all the most convincing proof is the proof of intimate realisation as a fact of

consciousness in योगजप्रत्यक्ष (yogic vision). Again and again has our Scripture proclaimed this golden truth.

मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।

आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥ १४ ॥

The contacts of the senses with outer world O son of Kunti, give us the sensations of pain and pleasure through cold and heat etc., but then nature is one of ceaseless flux and they are hence impermanent. Endure them with fortitude, O Bharata.

### NOTES

1. This is an answer to Arjuna's implied question as to why even in the case of one who knows that the soul is beyond birth and death there is the feeling of the *Dvandvas* (qualities) of life like heat and cold, pain and pleasure, etc. The Lord replies that these are ever-changing and impermanent and will cease to overthrow our self-poised equilibrium when we bear them with fortitude.

2 The impermanent and the permanent can never be really connected with each other. Hence the impermanent sense-contacts can never affect

the soul. Nilakanta says tersely and well सख्यमि  
 ध्यात्स्नुनावासावसथयायागान् । The reason why the soul  
 feels pain or pleasure is its illusion of identity with  
 a particular condition of mind or body. That is  
 the reason why the pains and pleasures of the  
 waking world are not carried into the dream world  
 as they would be if they were of the stuff of our  
 being.

3 Madhusoodana says well that the doubt of  
 Arjuna dispelled by this verse is as follows. Verse 13  
 showed that the soul is eternal. But the soul must  
 be different in each body because the pleasures and  
 pains of men differ. Each soul must have its own  
 separate pains and pleasures though it is eternal.  
 Hence the death of Bhishma and others will cause  
 pain to me though I am eternal. If this were not  
 the case and each man's pleasures and pains were  
 not peculiar to himself there would be confusion of  
 joys and griefs (सुखदुःखविपर्ययः). The answer is that  
 the contacts of the senses with the world give rise to  
 sensations of heat and cold and pain and pleasure in  
 the mind and that these sensations are not of the  
 nature of the soul. Why so? Because the soul is  
 eternal and the sensations are ephemeral. There can-  
 not be a relation of धर्मि (Dharmi) and धर्म (Dharma)  
 among them because Dharmi and Dharma are one.

न हि नित्यस्यानित्यधर्माश्रयत्वं सम्भवति, धर्मधर्मिणोरभेदात्सर्वधान्तरानुपपत्तेः साक्ष्यस्य साक्षिधर्मत्वानुपपत्तेः । Thus, the separateness of the soul and the sense-contacts is clear from the fact that the subject and the object cannot be identical साक्ष्यस्य साक्षिधर्मत्वानुपपत्तेश्च ।

4 Sri Sankaracharya points out another aspect of variability in sense-contacts besides their transience Heat gives us pleasure in winter but pain in summer. The touch of ice gives pleasure in summer but pain in winter

5 Heat and cold are mentioned as typical and illustrative of all pains and pleasures classified as आध्यात्मिक, आधिभौतिक and आधिदैविक

6 Thus the more we realise our oneness with the Permanent and Eternal Self the less are we affected by the ephemeral flux of life and its ever-born and ever-dying pains and pleasures Hence Arjuna is told not to grieve for the pain caused by his apprehended separation from his kinsmen by the cruel hand of death in battle.

7 Thus the psychological analysis of sensuous pleasure and pain leads us straight to the truth of things. In sleep pain and pleasure disappear. The thing that causes pain or pleasure in the waking world disappears and makes soon for mind-

born pains and pleasures of the dreamland. The beggar of the waking world may be an emperor in dreams. The same object may give pain or pleasure. Fire in our house or friend's house causes pain in a stranger's house indifference, and in an enemy's house pleasure. The sole cause is अभिमान (abhimana) by which the soul identifies itself with the mind which is the seat of pain and pleasure.

8 Sri Madhwacharya makes the verse yield a new richness of meaning by taking the first half of the stanza to have a note of interrogation. Do the sense-contacts alone cause pain or pleasure? No. They are impermanent. *Abhimana* is the important cause. It can be given up while sense contacts cannot be.

9 Some commentators interpret मान as meaning the senses. Others interpret it as sound etc. The main idea is the same in any view.

य हि न व्यययन्त्येते पुरुष पुरुषार्थिन ।

समदुःखसुखघोरसोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥ १५ ॥

O high souled among men! the man of wisdom whom these (contacts of the senses with the outer world do not affect and to whom pain and pleasure are equal and alike is fit for the attainment of liberation (Moksha).

## NOTES:

1 He is unaffected because of his realisation of the Eternal Self (नित्यात्मदर्शनात् as Sri Sankaracharya says)

2. Nilakanta says that these sense-contacts should not affect a man during the waking state or the dreamful state or असंप्रज्ञातसमाधि.

3 ५५ The term is used to show that the soul is only a sojourner in the body पृथु अष्टासु वसतीति ५५ (He who dwells in the 8 towns)

4. धीरं is interpreted as धीमन्तं, or ध्यायिन, or योगिन, or धिय ईरयन्तं (The man of wisdom or of devotion, or of concentration, or he who controls and directs his mind )

5 If bondage were natural to the soul, it will never go unless the soul is destroyed. But it is foreign to the soul and can be removed. The illuminer and the illumined can never be one and the same

6 This sameness and equableness can be attained not by flying away from pain and pleasure but by self-discipline which enables us to achieve balance of nature.

7 Sri Ramanuja says that he who does his allotted duty in a spirit of detachment will not be affected by the sense-contacts

नासतो विद्यते भावो नामाधो विद्यते सतः ।

उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥ १६ ॥

The unreal and transient hath no being. The real and eternal never ceases to be. They who have attained the faculty of seeing the truth of things know the real nature of both

### NOTES

1 The sense-contacts are unreal and fleeting. The soul is real and eternal. In the case of every thing we see on analysis that the attribute of existence is common to all though the other transient attributes vary. Without the basis of the permanent and eternal the elements of fleeting change cannot exist at all.

2 The *वस्तु* exist always—even in deep sleep because the soul realises *सुख* (pleasure) and *अज्ञान* (nescience) then and remembers these on waking up.

3. What is unreal? Whatever has *परिच्छेद* (limitation) *परिच्छेद* is of 3 kinds—*अव्ययपरिच्छेद* *देशपरिच्छेद*, *वस्तुपरिच्छेद* (limitation in time, limitation in

space, and limitation by other limited things, (वस्तु परिच्छेद is of 3 kinds—सजातीयभेद, विजातीयभेद, and स्वगतभेद (differentiation from like objects, differentiation from unlike objects, and internal differentiation) Some say that it is of 5 kinds जीवेश्वरभेद, जीवजगद्भेदः जीवपरस्परभेदः, ईश्वरजगद्भेद, जगत्परस्परभेदः It has well been said आदावन्ते च यत्रास्ति वर्तमानेऽपि तत्तथा ।

4 तत्त्वदर्शिभिः वस्तुयाथात्म्यादर्शनशीलैः ब्रह्मविद्भिः (those who are *habituated* by discipline and meditation to know and realise the truth and real nature of things) The Sruti says वाचांमणं विकारो नामधेयं मृत्तिकेत्येव सत्यम् ।

5 Sri Ramanujacharya says that असत् means the body and सत् means the soul

6 Sri Madhwacharya says that अपत् means Prakriti and that सत् means God and that the verse says that both are real The verse is thus split up न सतः त्रिधत्ते अभाव न अभावः विद्यते सतः Another meaning given by him is that असत् means sin and सत् means right and that the verse means from wrong no good can result and that from right no evil can result In this sense the verse would be an answer to Arjuna's statement पापमेवाश्रयेदस्मान् हत्वैतानाततायिनः । Both the meanings are very interesting but they do



not relate directly to the context. The verse is an explanation of the previous verse which says सोऽमृतं त्वय कल्पते and the verse previous to it which says तस्मिन्निदं भारत. The soul is eternal. The cause of शोक माह (grief and illusion lies really in the भीष्मपद्म (the world of mind). The news of a son having been born in a man's absence causes pleasure though the birth was long before then. The death of a relation causes pain only on its being communicated to us. The same thing that once caused pain now causes pleasure. As Kalidasa says in Vikramorvasiya the very objects which caused pain in the absence of the beloved cause pleasure in his presence (पादास्य एव शयिनं मुपयन्ति गाल पाशास्त एव मदनस्य मनोऽनुकूलाः । सर्वमरुक्षमिव मुन्दरि यददासीत्पद्ममेव वरादियानुनी तम् ॥) If by steady discipline, concentration meditation devotion and introspection we realise the Eternal we would not be agitated by the sense-contacts but would attain Eternal Bliss

अधिनाशि तु तद्विधिं येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।

धिनाशमव्ययस्यास्य न कश्चित्कर्तुमर्हति ॥ १० ॥

Know that to be indestructible by which all this universe is pervaded. There is none that has the power of effecting the destruction of the Imperishable One

## NOTES

1. It pervades all, as ether, is all-pervasive. It pervades and sustains even ether (akasa). It illuminates everything and is both immanent and transcendent. अजायमानो बहुधाभिजायते । तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाते ।

2 विनाश is देशकालवस्तुपरिच्छेद Destruction is limitation But Atma is Sachchidananda and is Aparichchhinna (unconditioned)

3 What is all-pervasive cannot be limited or destroyed for there is no other power to limit or destroy it स्वात्मनि क्रियाविरोधात् as Sri Sankaracharya says.

4 Limitation may be destruction (अनित्यत्व), or loss of body (देहहानि), or liability to grief (दुःखप्राप्ति), or imperfection (अपूर्णता) God is beyond all these He is all-pervasive, eternal, and perfect

5. We must not confuse this pervasion by God with the attempt of scientists like Sir J. C. Bose to prove the aliveness of the so-called "dead" matter These deal with the pervasion by *energy* which resides in and displays itself as much in "inanimate matter" as in animate bodies.

6. Sri Ramanujacharya says that the verse

refers to jivas (individual souls) and that they are collectively everywhere

अन्तर्धन्त इमे देहा नित्यस्योक्ताः शरीरिण ।

अनाशिनोऽप्रमे यस्य तस्माद्युक्ष्यस्य भारता ॥ १८ ॥

These perishable bodies have been declared to be in relation to the Eternal Embodied One who is indestructible and inconceivable Therefore fight, O Bharata

### NOTES

1 देहाः—The plural is used as we have sthula sukshma and karana sariras Nitya and Anasi are both used—because in respect of worldly objects we see disappearance or change and the Lord wants to negative both in regard to the soul

2 अजम्—It may be asked is not Atma disclosed by the Veda as अजम्, though not by प्रत्यक्ष or अनुमान ? No Atma is स्वतस्मिन् (self revealed) Sastra merely removes wrong notions imposed by nescience. Sri Sankaracharya says साह्यं त्वन्मम प्रमाणं न त्वन्मात्रोपपन्ननिर्दिष्टत्वेन अमानत्वं मात्मनि प्रतिपद्येत न त्वन्मात्रोपपन्नत्वेन । Atma is प्रमाणा and एकरूप—as Sri Ramanuja says

3 It has been well said

B G 10

प्रमाणमप्रमाणं च प्रमाणास्तथैव च ।

यत्प्रसादात्प्रसिद्ध्यन्ति तदसंभवाद् न ॥

4. युद्धयस्व Sri Sankara shows that this is not a positive injunction. It means, do not desist from your duty of war. Arjuna had come to fight but was overcome by soka (grief) and moha (illusion) The Lord removes the hindrance to his doing of his duty The seeming command is hence an अनुवाद, not a विधि Each man must do his duty and rise through it to devotion and wisdom and attain self-realisation अपवादोपवादे उत्सर्गस्य स्थिति (if the exception is overthrown the rule remains) Sri Ramanuja says अमृतत्वप्राप्तये अनभिर्साहितयुक्तं युद्धाख्यं कर्मारमस्व ।

5 Sri Madhwacharya says that the verse means that the souls are God's bodies i.e., God's images in the spiritual body This view is no doubt beautiful but the context shows that the Lord is now dealing with the utter separateness of Atma and Anatma and is not here dealing with the complexities of thought about the inter-relations of the Soul and the Oversoul

6 Each of the 6 words—इमे, देहाः, नित्यस्य, शरीरिणः, अनाशिनः, and अप्रमेयस्य—emphasises an aspect of difference between soul and body देहा कर्मफलमोकार्थतया भूतसंघातरूपः (material combinations to enable

the soul to reap the fruits of actions) as Sri Ramanuja says

य एन वेत्ति हन्तार यश्चैन मन्यते हतम् ।  
उभौ तौ न विजानीतो नाय हन्ति न हन्यते ॥ १२ ॥

He who regards the soul as slayer and he who regards the soul as slain—both are ignorant  
He slayeth not nor is he slain

### NOTES

1 This and the next verse are taken from the Katha Upanishad by the Lord as authoritative declarations

2 The verse shows that the soul is neither कर्ता nor कर्म It disproves the Tarkika (logicians) theory of the soul's being a *karta* and the Charvaka (agnostic) theory of the soul ceasing to exist at the time of the death of the body

3 Well is it said

आत्मा क्वादिस्वप्नमा अक्षीस्तर्हि मुक्तताम् ।  
न हि स्वभावो भावानो आकर्तृत्वोऽप्यवशेः ॥

This means that if the soul is a doer by nature that quality will never disappear being like the heat of the sun and hence there would be no use in praying for मुक्ति It has also been said

नर्ते स्याद्विक्रिया दुःखी साक्षिता का विकारिणः ।

घाविक्रिया सद्व्याणा साक्ष्यतोऽहमविक्रियः ॥

The soul is the witness Eternal, Immutable,  
Perfect

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचि-

न्नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः ।

अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो

न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥ २० ॥

He is never born, nor doth He ever die.  
Nor does He, having been born, cease to be.  
He is unborn, immortal, eternal, ever new though  
ever-old. He is not slain even though the body  
be slain

### NOTES

1 This stanza also is taken from Katha Upanishad

2 It negatives in regard to the soul the modifications inherent in matter, existence, birth, growth, transformation, decay, and death 'जायतेऽस्ति वर्धते विपरिणमतेऽपक्षीयते विनश्यति' इति षड्भाव-विकाराः ।

3 भूत्वा भविता न भूयः is used to negative the क्षीणकविज्ञानवाद of Buddhists The self is not a series

of momentary realisations or sensations but is a changeless and eternal truth. The fact of self-consciousness that 'I am the grandson of so and so and am the same man today as then and am the grandfather of so and so' is clear proof of this.

4 पुरातनः—It shows that the soul is older than even the akasa (ether)—the oldest of creations  
पुरातपि नम एकस्मै

5 Here न जायत म्रियते is the प्रतिज्ञा (i.e.) the proposition or fact to be proved. कदाचिन्नाय मृत्वा भविता न भूयः contains the reasoning. अतो नित्यः represents the conclusion.

वेदाधिनाशिनं नित्यं य एनमजमव्ययम् ।

कथं स पुरुषः पार्थ कं धातयति हन्ति कम् ॥ २१ ॥

He who knoweth him to be indestructible, eternal, without birth, and immutable—whom can such a person cause to be slain or whom can he slay ?

### NOTES

1 वेद—The knowing here referred to is 'realisation' and not mere intellectual comprehension. It means शास्त्राचार्योपदेक्षान्वा साक्षात्करोति as Sri Madhusoodana says.

2 The Veda says

आत्मानं चेद्विजानीयादयमस्मीति पूर्यः ।

किमिच्छन्कस्य कामाय शरीरमुत्सृज्यरेत् ॥

3 Sri Sankaracharya says that this verse shows that the self is really a witness and not a doer and that liberation is through jnana

4 Sri Madhwa says that the verse negatives not action but action independent of God

वासंसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय

नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।

तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णा-

न्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देहा ॥ २२ ॥

As a man, casting off worn-out garments, wears new and different garments, so the soul casting-off worn-out bodies, enters new and different bodies

### NOTES

1 This verse shows that the new bodies may be similar to or different from, the old body, as in the case of new cloths. The words नवानि and अपराणि are both used in the verse. This shows that there is no guarantee that a soul with a human embodiment is sure to have human embodiments alone hereafter.



2 As clothes grow old despite all care so bodies will grow old and die despite all medical help

3 The Mahabharata gives in the Santi Parva another telling illustration—that of tenant leaving an old house and occupying a new house

यथा हि पुरा चानां पुनः सप्रविशप्रभाम् ।  
एव जीव शरीराणि सानि तानि प्रपद्यते ।  
दहापुगवानुमृज्य नवान्प्रतिपद्यते ॥

4 The Gita shows in Chapter VIII verse 0 the importance of the अन्तिमस्मृति (or the last thought) in regard to the future embodiment and this again depends upon the regulated and disciplined life

5 जीव—does not negate the dying of infant bodies It shows that bodies that have fulfilled their purposes are cast away whether they are young or old

6 Thus there is a law of evolution governing spiritual life as there is a law of evolution governing physical life

7 Death is only the gate of life or rather death is reborn as life The death of the seed is the life of the tree

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावक ।  
न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मास्रत ॥ २३ ॥

Weapons cannot cleave him ; nor can fire burn him Water cannot wet him, nor can air dry him away.

### NOTES

1. The Scripture describes the soul as अशब्दमस्पर्शमरूपमव्ययं तथाऽरसं नित्यमगन्धवच्च यत्, The soul is without देशकालवस्तुपरिच्छेद

2 The main idea is that the soul is immaterial and eternal and cannot be affected by the forces of the material universe A body may be burnt when the house where it is is burnt But the soul within the house of the body is not burnt when the body is burnt

अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च ।

नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातनः ॥ २४ ॥

He cannot be cut to pieces , he cannot be burnt , neither can he be wetted by water nor dried by air , he is eternal, all-pervasive, firm immovable, and beginningless

### NOTES

1. Sri Sankaracharya says that the Lord is

repeating what has been already stated because the matter is difficult of comprehension

2 Matter in its fundamental form is indestructible but it changes form perpetually. The soul is unchanging and indestructible. It is *ac huda nanda* whether one with *Paramatman* as the Advaitins say or in eternal relation with him as the Visishtadvaitins say

अव्यक्तोऽयमचिन्त्योऽयमविकार्योऽयमुच्यते ।  
तस्मादेव विदेत्येन नानुशोचितुमर्हसि ॥ २५ ॥

He is not realisable by the senses, he is not realisable by the mind he is immutable; therefore knowing him to be such, you should not grieve in regard to him

#### NOTES

1. As the soul has no material form the senses and the mind cannot grasp it विकार means change of form—सूक्ष्म स्थूल etc.

2 If the mind becomes pure and steadfast, the full glory of the soul is reflected in it. इत्येते शब्दा गुण्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः —

अथ चैनं नित्यजात नित्य घा गम्यसे सूक्ष्मम् ।  
तथापि त्व महाबाहो नैव शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ २६ ॥

Even if you regard him as constantly born and constantly dying, even then, O mighty-armed, you should not grieve.

### NOTES

1 The Lord merely adds here an argument on the assumption of the ordinary view being right अथ shows that there is a change of topic

2 The prevalent ordinary views are the Buddhist view that the soul is born and dies every moment, the Charvaka view which identifies body and soul, the Tarkika view that the soul is eternal but is born with the *body and dies with it*, the view that the soul is born with the body and dies with it though both are separate, the view that the soul endures from Kalpa to Kalpa and then dies, etc etc etc The Lord says that even according to these views grief is absurd, because what is the use of grieving for the inevitables? Arjuna was afraid of sin and its future consequences In the light of the above views there could be no future consequences In the light of the really correct view the soul is eternal and pure

जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च ।  
तस्मादपरिहार्येऽर्थे न त्व शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ २७ ॥

Certain is death to the born and certain is

birth to the dead Therefore you should not grieve for what is irremediable

### NOTES

1 This verse merely carries forward the idea of the previous verse If the soul is born with the body and dies with the body and is then reborn with the body this cycle will go on whether you will or not Why then grieve for the inevitable?

अव्यक्तादीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत ।

अव्यक्तनिधनान्येव तत्र का परिदेहेना ॥ २८ ॥

All the beings have an unknown beginning, a known middle, and an unknown ending What ground is there for lamentation?

### NOTES

1 It is well said अदृशनादापतितः पुनश्चादृशन गतः He came from non existence and has gone back there That is what the spectacle of life shows to one who gazes on its outside If we accept this, the Lord says that there is no ground for grief These verses do not deal with the real nature of the soul for that has been stated already The Lord says that even if we take the erroneous views of those who do not know the inner truth of things the attitude of grief is unreasonable and improper

From the next verse the interrupted exposition of the real truth is resumed and completed after a few other special appeals to Arjuna's chivalry and valour.

आश्चर्यवत्पश्यति कश्चिदेन-

माश्चर्यवद्ब्रूति तथैव चान्यः ।

आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति

श्रुत्वाप्येन वेद न चैव कश्चित् ॥ २९ ॥

One regards the soul as a marvel. Another speaks of the soul as a marvel. A third hears of him as a marvel. Even after hearing about him no one realises him.

### NOTES

1 This verse is meant to show the difficulty of realising the true nature of the soul. It suggests also that those who know and speak and hear about the Self are rare and remarkable men. The Sruthi says

आश्चर्यो वक्ता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धा आश्चर्यो ज्ञाता कुशलानुशिष्टः ।

2 To vision Him, to voice Him, and to hear about Him are all wonderful for He is beyond mind and speech.

3 The verse may mean also that He is realised, taught, and heard as a marvel.

1 Sri Ramanujacharya points out that the context shows that the Lord is referring here to the soul (jīva) and not to God. The soul is different from all material objects and is hence a real marvel because a marvel is what is unlike all other things.

5 Nilakanta takes एन to relate to the cosmos and says that the verse impresses upon us the inscrutable character of the world of being.

6 The soul can be realised in एन॥ It is यो।नमस्तस्य॥ It is called wonderful because the realisations of the transcendental and supernormal consciousness appear so to the ordinary consciousness. The Katha Upanishad says

परां विद्वानि व्यमुणस्त्वयभूस्तस्मात्परां न्यस्यति नान्तरात्मन् ।  
कथिदीरः प्रश्नाः ॥ आत्मानमेक्ष्व ॥ एतच्चतुर्मुदत्तमिच्छन् ॥

7 We realise the supreme in deep sleep yet we do not know it. Many speak learnedly about Him and many hear about Him. Yet very few know and realise Him. Only those whose mind becomes pure and free from sin can realise Him. As Sri Ramanujacharya finely says मद्भावात्परां धीमतां पश्यन् । It is said also ज्ञानमुत्पद्यते पुंसो क्षयात्पापस्य कर्मणः ।

8. Thus the view that this verse describes the Oversoul and the view that it describes the cosmos have elements of truth, but the most appropriate meaning in the light of the context is that it describes the soul as it is, beyond and behind the body, the senses, and the mind. The soul is separate from the स्थूल, सूक्ष्म, and कारण bodies.

देही नित्यमवध्योऽयं देहे सर्वस्य भारत ।

तस्मात्सर्वाणि भूतानि न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ ३० ॥

The soul though dwelling in the bodies of all is invulnerable and immortal, O Bharata. Therefore thou shouldst not grieve for any embodied being.

### NOTES

1 The Lord here returns to His own point of view and concludes the present प्रकरण (theme).

2 Death is not annihilation, it is no loss of ultimate and essential reality; it does not affect the real destiny of the soul. Where, then, is there any occasion for grief?

3 As regards this verse also, some take it as referring to God and others as referring to the soul. As stated by me already the context shows that it refers to the soul though the Lord could



certainly have implied also the real and essential divinity of the soul. The Advaitins hold the soul and the oversoul to be one. The Visishtadvaitins hold them to be separate and yet one because the Lord has the cosmos and the jivas as his universal body. According to them the souls are atomic and similar though the bodies differ from *detahood* downwards. The Dvaitins hold also that the souls differ in quality and capacity. Whether the ultimate truth is universal unity or universal equality or universal variety all are agreed that the soul is *sacchidananda* in its essential nature.

स्वधर्ममपि चावेक्ष्य न विकम्पितुमहमि ।  
धर्म्यास्त्रि युद्धाच्छ्रेयोऽन्यत्क्षानियस्य न विद्यते ॥

Looking at your own Dharma also, you ought not to falter. For there is no higher good and auspiciousness to a Kshatriya than a war which does not swerve from Dharma.

#### NOTES

1 The Lord means that Arjuna as a Kshatriya prince should regard war as natural to him. The Lord is going to show this in Chapter XVIII verse 43. Also a righteous war is to protect men and establish Dharma through the means of victory and conquest. This is in answer to Arjuna's state

ment in Chapter I, that he will go to hell if he kills men in battle नरके नियतं वासो भवति । न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे । The Lord shows where true श्रेयस् is for a Kshatriya

2 The duty of a Kshatriya to be the armed and victorious protector of Dharma is thus stated by Parasara

क्षत्रियो हि प्रजा रक्षन्श्चक्रपाणि प्रदण्डवान् ।  
निर्जित्य परसैन्यानि क्षितिं वर्मेण पालयेत् ॥

Manu says

समोत्तमाधमै राजा चाहूतः पालयन् प्रजा ।  
न निर्वर्तेत सभ्रामात् क्षात्र धर्ममनुस्मरन् ॥  
संभ्रामेष्वनिवर्तित्व प्रजानां चैव पालनम् ।  
शुश्रूषा ब्राह्मणानां च राज्ञः श्रेयस्कर परम् ॥

3 The Sanskrit word Dharma is untranslatable in English It imports the idea of prenatal tendencies, the idea of morality, the idea of scriptural injunction, etc It means even God Hence doing duty in the proper spirit is an act of worship of God

4. In Wordsworth's *Happy Warrior* we have a fine description of the man who rejoices in a righteous war and does his work in life in a spirit of joyful elation at his being called to it

'Whose high endeavours are an inward light  
That makes the path before him always  
bright.'

5 A righteous war causes no ill to the fighter or the slain as the killing of animals in sacrifice causes no ill to the sacrificer or the sacrificial animal but benefits both. This meaning is specially emphasised by Sri Ramanuja.

6 The Lord is pleased by His commands to each man being carried out by the latter and not by the latter doing another act even if it be higher just as a King is pleased by obedience and not by a disobedient doing of a better action.

यद्वैश्यां चोपपन्नस्यर्गद्वारमपावृतम् ।

सुखिन क्षत्रियाः पार्थ त्वम ते युद्धमोदस्य ॥ ३२ ॥

O Partha ! Blessed are the Kshatriyas who are called to such a war as this where the gate of heaven is flung open without any seeking for it.

#### NOTES

1 यद्वैश्यां means also what is got by divine agency and grace

2. Minānusoḍana points out that it may be argued that Dharma Sastra says that you should not kill (न हिंस्यास्यमभूतानि) while Artha Sastra pres

cribes war for Kshatriyas, and that the Dharma Sastra is higher than Artha Sastra and must be followed.

स्मृत्योर्विरोधे न्यायस्तु बलवान्व्यवहारतः ।

अर्थशास्त्रात्तु बलवद्धर्मशास्त्रमिति स्थितिः ॥

The Lord shows that the fighting of a righteous war by a Kshatriya is a duty cast upon him by Dharma Sastra and that if a warrior fights in a righteous cause and as a Karma Yogin he attains heaven. As righteous war is enjoined, the text of prohibition has no application विधिस्तृष्टे निषेधानवकाशः ।

3 This verse is an answer to Arjuna's question in Chapter I. स्वजनं हि कथं हत्वा सुखिनः स्याम माधव ।

4. सुखिनः सुखं पुण्यं (merit). Sri Desikar thinks that it means antecedent पुण्य The Lord refers to such antecedent पुण्य and also to the prospective पुण्य. It is said that warriors attain Heaven.

ये युध्यन्ते प्रघनेषु शूरासौ ये तनुत्थजः ।

ये वा सहस्रदक्षिणास्ताञ्चिदेवपि गच्छताम् ॥

आहवेषु मिथोऽन्योन्यं जिघासन्तो महीक्षितः ।

युध्यमानाः परं शक्या स्वर्गं यान्त्यपराजुक्ताः ॥

अथ चेत्त्वमिमं धर्म्यं संग्रामं न करिष्यसि ।

ततः स्वधर्मं कीर्त्तिं च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥

But if thou wilt not fight in this just war, thou wilt be thereby casting away thy svadharma (your own dharma) and forfeiting thy honour, and thou wilt also incur sin

### NOTES

1. Manu describes Dharma Yuddha thus in verses full of true nobility of feeling and chivalry of nature :

न ह्युपेक्ष्यापुप्यमानो रण रिपून् ।  
 न कृषिभिर्नापि दिग्यैर्नाग्निज्वलितवज्रैः ॥  
 न च हन्यात्स्थितास्त न ह्नांश्च न कृताञ्जलिम् ।  
 न मुञ्चकेन नासीनं न तपस्वीति वादिनम् ॥  
 न सुप्त न विवर्णाद् न वग्न न निरायुधम् ।  
 नाप्युपमान पश्यन्त न परेण समागतम् ।  
 नायुपव्यसनमस्रं नार्तं नातिपरिश्रुतम् ॥  
 न भीत न पराङ्मुखं सखां धममनुस्मरन् ॥

2. Hence Arjuna should perform only Dharma Yuddha and just as it was his duty to do so it was also his nature to do so. No sin or evil consequences can attach to doing one's duty. The injunctions say

निर्जिह्य परीक्ष्यानि क्षितिं धर्मं च पाप्मयेत् ।  
 न निवर्तेत सप्रमात् ।

3. Only the nation that fights for its rights in just wars can preserve immortal vitality. That one will not live which one is not prepared to die for. The fund of altruism in the community determines the longevity of its vital racial life

4 The Lord points out also that if Arjuna fled from the field, he would be killed by his unscrupulous enemies, and further his previous merit (पुण्य) will go to the King whom he betrays and the King's sins (पाप) will go to him. Manu says -

यस्तु भीतः परावृत्तः स भ्रामे हन्यते परैः ।

भर्तुर्यदुष्कृतं किञ्चित्सर्वं प्रतिपद्यते ॥

यच्चास्य सुकृतं किञ्चिदमुन्नय्यमुपार्जितम् ।

भर्ता तत्सर्वमादत्ते पराकृतदत्तस्य तु ॥

Yajnavalkya says .

राजा सुकृतमादत्ते दत्तानां विपलायिनाम् ।

5. This verse is the Lord's reply to Arjuna's statements in Chapter I

पापमेवाश्रयेदस्मान्दत्तैस्तानाततायिनः ।

एतान्न हन्तुमिच्छामि घ्नतोऽपि मयुसूदन ॥

6 Hence it is in the performance of duty that everything lies. As Pope says

"Honour and shame from no conditions rise,  
Act well your part there all honour lies."

The story of Dharma Vyadha shows this very well. कीर्ति means honour and renown resulting from the doing of *sradharmas* in an exalted spirit of *Vishkama* and *Isvararpana*

अकीर्तिं चापि मृतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेष्वप्ययम् ।  
समावितस्य चाकीर्तिर्मरणादतिरिच्यते ॥ ३४ ॥

The world will always recount thy eternal disgrace. To one who is highly honoured dishonour is worse than death

#### NOTES

1. By the word मृतानि not only men but also gods sages, and others

2. अयम् —means for a very long time

3. The second half of the verse answers the question Is not life with dishonour better than death?

4. As Shakespeare says in Othello

“ Good name, in man and woman dear my  
Lord

Is the immediate jewel of their souls.

Who steals my purse steals trash It is  
something nothing,

It was mine, t is his and has been slave to  
thousands





Thine enemies will speak about thee many unspeakable slanders, cavilling at thy prowess. What is more painful than that?

## NOTES

1. While honourable warriors will *think* lightly of you as stated in verse 35, enemies will be joyfully articulate in slandering you. They will attribute also false acts of shame to you, seeing an opportunity for slander.

हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।  
तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ का तेय युधाय कृतनिदचयः ॥ ३७ ॥

Dying thou attainest heaven conquering thou enjoyest the earth. Therefore, O Son of Kunti, arise, resolved to fight.

## NOTES

1. This is in answer to Arjuna's statement:

न चैतद्विश्वः क्षत्रभो गरीयो यद्वा जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयुः ।

2. The victor attains earthly sovereignty and *svarga* afterwards. The slain attains *svarga* at once.

3. The attempt of some commentators to make *svarga* mean *moksha* is not acceptable. Such doing of duty is a *Moksha saithana* (a means of reaching Moksha in due course) while it is also the door to heaven.

4. निश्चय means a religious conviction.

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ  
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥ ३८ ॥

Viewing with composure and treating alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, get ready for battle Then shalt thou not incur sin.

### NOTES

1. The Lord teaches that Nishkama karma leads to liberation and God-realisation The appeal to the lower reasons for doing duty is over. Here the Lord appeals to the highest reason that it is the only means of God-realisation through purification of mind and attainment of wisdom and devotion फलेच्छा तु परित्यज्य कृत कर्म विशुद्धिकृत् ।

2 The minor results stated already are accidental and accessory, just as in the case of one planting a mango tope for fruits, shade and fragrance also come to him unthought for. Even if these do not come, Dharma remains by his side to uplift him As Apastamba says तद्यथात्र फलार्थे निर्मिते छायागन्ध इत्यनूत्पद्येत एवं धर्मं चर्यमाणमर्था अनूत्पद्यन्ते नो चेदनूत्पद्यन्ते न धर्महानिर्भवति ।

यथा तेऽभिहिता सांख्ये युयुर्योगे त्विमा शृणु ।

बुद्ध्या युक्तो यथा पार्थ कर्मण्य ध मदात्स्यसि ॥ ३९ ॥

This has been declared to you the knowledge in respect of the realisation of the Eternal Truth. Now hear the knowledge of the means of such realisation—by means of the attainment of which knowledge you shall be freed from the bondage in the form of karma (action)

### NOTES

1. The Lord after various appeals to Arjuna pointing out the unwisdom of his resolve returns to and concludes the portion of the discourse which gave him the deepest truths of life *vi*. *Jnana yoga*. Henceforth the Lord leads from Jnanayoga to the means *vi*., Karma yoga which is going to be the main theme up to the end of the VIth Adhyaya

2. The view of some persons that the words Samkhya and Yoga here refer to the systems of philosophy going by that name is wrong and is against our traditional interpretation

3. Karma yoga purifies the mind and fits us for Bhakti and Jnana through the grace of god. It removes karmabandha *vi*., the embodiments of *samsara* due to the actions born of motive and

impelled by desire. If therefore we do our *dharma* unattached and dedicating its fruits to the Lord, *karma* has no power of generating bondage. The *Isavasyopanishad* says

ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यत्किंच जगत्या जगत् ।

तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा. मागृधः कस्य सिद्धनम् ॥

कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेच्छतं समाः ।

एवं त्वयि नान्ययेतोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरे ॥

4. This does not mean that *Jnana yoga* will not remove *karma bandha*. The Lord says in the *Gita* ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन । The *Sruti* says: तपश्चैवात्मपदं विदित्वा न लिप्यते कर्मणा पापकेन । But the impure mind immersed in worldliness cannot at once rise to this height. *Nishkama Karma yoga* will effectively and easily purify it धर्मेण पापमपनुदति । I am quite unable to understand the angry attitude of some modern commentators in regard to *Madhusoodana's* beautiful exposition on this point.

5. The Lord does not mean any reflection on *Arjuna* as being unfit for *jnana yoga*. Many persons seem to forget in this connection that the Lord gave the complete *Sastra* to the world making the teaching to *Arjuna* an occasion.

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः ।

पार्यो वत्स. सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ॥

According to Sri Ramanuja the matter is even simpler. According to him jnana yoga is the knowledge of the true nature of the jiva. It and karma yoga are both elements in Bhakti yoga which leads us to God. Hence he defines *yoga* here thus.

आत्मज्ञानपूर्वकमाक्षसाधनमूलकमभिधाने यो युक्तियागा यत्कस्य  
स इह योगसन्देह उच्यते ।

7 Sri Madhwa refers to Vyasa-smṛiti which defines योग्य thus. आत्मवत्त्वविज्ञानं चाश्वमिक्षमिधीयते । He refers to Bhagavata about yoga. सद्यः योगा प्रमुखाय पुत्री धेयः प्रविद्धः ।

नेहामिहमनाशोऽस्ति मत्प्रयायो न विद्यते ।

स्यस्यमभ्यस्य घर्मस्य नायते महतो मयात् ॥ ४० ॥

In this karma yoga there is no loss of effort begun but uncompleted nor is there disaster from non completion. Even the performance of a little of it saves us from the great terror of samsara.

#### NOTES

1. In the case of cultivation or house-building unfinished attempt is wasted. In medical treatment it leads to disasters. Karma yoga is unlike these. पापं न चेह नाशुष विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते—the Lord says in Chapter VI.

2. Karma leads to फल or fruit and itself dies. Karma yoga has no fruit in view and never dies. The Sruti says तमेत वेदानुवचनेन ब्राह्मणा विविदिषन्ति यज्ञेन दानेन तपसाऽनाशकेन. Such moral discipline leads to its own self-intensification.

जन्मजन्मान्तराभ्यस्तं दानमध्ययन तपः ।

तेनैवाभ्यासयोगेन तच्चैवाभ्यसते पुनः ॥

Love of God leads to perfect purity.

सर्वपापप्रसक्तोऽपि ध्यायन्निमिषमच्युतम् ।

भूयस्तपस्वी भवति पङ्क्तिपावनपावनः ॥

3 The Sruti says तद्यथेह कर्मचितो लोकः क्षीयते एवमेवामुत्र पुण्यकृतो लोकः क्षीयते But this does not apply to Karma yoga. A mere meritorious act will lead to certain joys in heaven but the fruit of it will be worked out by enjoyment and will disappear. But this is not the case with Karma yoga. It has been said

तद्यथेहेति या निन्दा सा फलेन तु कर्मणि ।

फलेच्छा तु परित्यज्य कृतं कर्म विशुद्धिकृत् ॥

व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिरेकेह कुरुनन्दन ।

बहुशाखा ह्यनन्ताश्च बुद्धयोऽव्यवसायिनाम् ॥४१॥

The Buddhi or knowledge (in relation to Sankhya and Yoga) above said is steadfast and

unchanging The *buddhis* (mental states) of others who are not steadfast and rooted in truth are manifold and endless

### NOTES

1 Why is this Karma yoga buddhi—mental state rooted in Karma yoga—steadfast and unchanging? Sri Sankara answers प्रमादनिवृत्त्या । The plans of others are conflicting varied and manifold because they are not rooted in truth but in desire. Sri Ramaunja well says that Karma yoga is here contrasted with Kamya Karma (desireful action)

2. It has been well said

मनो हि द्विविधं प्रोक्तं शुद्धं चाशुद्धमेव च ।

अशुद्धं कामसंकल्पं शुद्धं कामनिवर्जितम् ॥

3 Sri Madhwa quotes the following beautiful stanza from *Brahma Vairata*

पुद्गिनिर्जाततत्त्वानामेका विष्णुपरायणा ।

बहुधासा अचन्ताय पुद्गोऽव्ययसमिनाम् ॥

4. Madhusoodana says that एका is used to show that Sankhya and Yoga have the same fruit (एकफल)

यामिमां पुण्यितां याच प्रयवन्त्यविपश्चितः ।

वेव्वावृता पार्थ नान्यवस्तीति यादेन ॥ ४२ ॥

ज्ञात्वात्मानं, स्वर्गपरा जन्म कर्मफलप्रदाम् ।  
 क्रियाविशेषबहुलां भोगैश्वर्यगतिं प्रति ॥ ४३ ॥

भोगैश्वर्यप्रगन्तानां तथाप्यन्यथेन ज्ञानम् ।  
 व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समायां न विधीयते ॥

This Parvalla (knowledge of Sankhya yoga and Karma yoga) which is of the nature of steadfastness does not arise in the minds of those who are not of illumined mind and constantly speak flowery words, who rejoice in the Veda ritualistic texts and say that there is nothing higher, who are full of desire and yearn for heaven (*svarga*), who speak words relating to acts which are the cause of births as the fruit of deeds, whose utterances are full of those manifold karmas (actions) which are the means of attainment of enjoyment and power, who are deeply attached to enjoyment and power, and whose minds are stolen away by the words describing the means of attaining them.

### NOTES

1. The Lord here describes the stream of karma (कर्मप्रवाह) and shows what are the words and actions that keep us circling in the realm of



births and deaths and what lead to liberation and realisation

2 Only that deed is sinless and uplifting and liberating which is the doing of righteous duty in a disinterested and unattached spirit and as an offering to God. This is why the killing by a murderer is a sin while the killing by a soldier fighting in a righteous cause is a purifying and uplifting force

3 Some foolish people have said that the Lord here attacks the Vedas. How can he who is the वेद (known only through the Vedas) and the ओम्निवस्तुत (the Oversoul declared in the Upanishads) attack the Scriptures. He himself declares later on

यः शास्त्रविभिन्नुत्पद्यत तद्वत् क्षमश्चरतः ।

न यः सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न मुक्तं न परं गतिम् ।

तस्माच्छास्त्रं ब्रह्मणो तं कथयाम्यव्यवस्थितम् ।

इत्याशास्त्रविधानाच्च क्षमः क्षुमिहादधि ॥

(Verses 23 and 24 Chapter XVI)

He condemns not वेद (Vedas) but Vedavadas. He merely states here that there is a higher path Karma yoga which is superior as a step to liberation to the doing of meritorious acts leading only to heaven whence the soul must return after the

enjoyment of the fruit of the acts is over. Such acts are like golden chains which bind as securely as iron chains though they are blighter and more beautiful

4. पुष्पितां वाचं The Lord refers to flowery words which like blossoms please at first sight and can further be seen from a distance but have no eternal fruits The higher paths cannot be seen from far and cannot attract us from a distance. We must go near to them and persist in them before they will yield the fullness of their divine sweetness

5 The texts referred to are those like the following

“अक्षय्यं ह वै चातुर्मास्ययाजिन सुकृतं भवति ।”

“अपाम सोमममृता अभूम ।”

“यस्य पर्णमयी जुहूर्भवति न पाप श्लोकं शृणोति ।”

6. On the other hand we have such higher texts as the following

“परीक्ष्य लोकान्कर्मचितान्प्राज्ञाणो निर्वेदमायान्नास्त्यकृत. कृतेन ।”

“तद्यथेह कर्मचितो लोकः क्षीयते एवमेवायुत्र पुण्यचितो लोकः क्षीयते ॥”

“हवा ह्येते अहदा यज्ञरूपा अष्टादशोक्तमवरं ह्येषु कर्म ।

एतच्छ्रेयो येऽभिनन्दन्ति भूदा जरामृत्युं ते पुनरेवापियन्ति ॥”

7 Thus those who do shastraic and good Kam yakarmas but are not Karmayogins are placed below the latter. But let no one lay the flattering unction to his soul that the worldly men bent on worldly careers can place themselves on a level with them because they are placed on a lower plane than the Karmayogins and Sankhyayogins or that there is no virtue or efficacy in the scriptural rites. The atheists of today will stick at nothing to cry down shastraic *kar mas* but they cannot be allowed to exploit Sri Krishna as their ally.

8 समाधी Sri Madhwa interprets it to mean समामर्षेन According to him it means a peaceful reliance on God. He cites as authority the following Puranic verse

न तस्य तत्त्वप्रद्वणाय साक्षाद्वरीयसीरपि वानस्त्वमासन् ।  
स्वप्ने निश्चया गृहमेधि सीम्य न यस्य हेवानुमित स्वय स्यात् ॥

त्रैगुण्यवियया चेवा नित्यैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।  
निर्वृद्धो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो नियोगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥

The Vedas have as their theme त्रैगुण्य i.e. the sum total of embodied life which is the result of the operation of the three Gunas. O Arjuna, thou must become free from these Gunas (qualities), free from the various dualities of life,

ever rooted in the Sattvic quality, unabsorbed in acquisition and preservation, and full of attained self-mastery through reliance on God.

### NOTES

1 In this stanza the Lord tells us that the qualities of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* are of the essence of the realms of mind and matter, the soul being different from them the Eternal Witness, the Eternal Consciousness, and the Eternal Bliss

2 *Guna* is properly speaking energy rather than quality the mind being the storehouse of superfine energies which are far subtler and more powerful than the energies that reside in matter. This aspect will be dealt with in full in the later chapters of the Gita

3 The Lord distinguishes in this stanza the higher type of men as compared with those who are attached to *karmas* and not to *Karmayoga*. *Karmayoga* illumines us and dowers us with Eternal Bliss

4 Sri Venkatanatha explains well a very important aspect. Why should the Vedas then teach this intricate maze of *Karmas*? They appeal to the totality of souls who are of different grades of rootedness in *Samsara* and gives us the totality of

purifying *Karmas* leaving each soul to take up that purifying *Karma* suited to its birth and fitness. Those who are not fit as yet to seek final emancipation and in whom the mental energies have to be guided have to be led from a life of aimless activity to a life of purifying *Karmas* thence to *Karmayoga*, thence to *Bhakti* and *Jnana* and thence to *Moksha*. Sri Ramanauja says well तमामृतं । तत्र प्रयुज्यां सावप्रयुज्यां च वासुदेवात्मन द्विभयमोपयन्ति वेदाः ।

5 The only means to God realisation is the attainment of the pure *Sattvic* state by rising above the state where our *Sattva* guna is constantly attacked and upset by *rajas* and *tamas*.

6 It is only then that we would cease to be constantly unsettled by the *dvandvas* (pain and pleasure, heat and cold etc). In verse 1-4 the Lord has taught us the secret of the victory over these *dvandvas*. If the preponderance of *Sattva* Guna is attained the *dvandvas* which are the result of the other two *gunas* will not affect us.

7 The Lord then tells us the means of the attainment of the *sattvic* state. It is dispassion the getting rid of the hankering after acquisition and preservation. *अपेक्ष* is acquisition (*अपेक्षयित्वा*) and *रक्षण* is preservation (*रक्षयित्वा*)

8. Then the question arises, how are we to live? Sri Madhusoodana and Venkatanatha explain आत्मवान् as meaning reliant on God. The Lord says later on in the Gita तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम्. Sri Madhusoodana says well आत्मा परमात्मा ध्येयत्वेन योगक्षेमादिनिर्वाहकत्वेन च वर्तते यस्य स आत्मवान्. Sri Madhwa says that the Lord prohibits the acquisition and preservation of what is forbidden.

9. Sri Madhwa explains that विषय means "the apparent meaning" and says that the real inner meaning of every portion of the Vedas is the praise of God.

वेदे रामायणे चैव पुराणे भारते तथा ।

आदावन्ते च मध्ये च विष्णु सर्वत्र गीयते ॥

10. There is no inconsistency between निवै-गुण्य and नित्यसत्त्वस्थ. It is only through the latter that the former *viz.*, the Self established in its own glory above the Gunas स्वे महिम्नि प्रतिष्ठितः can be realised.

11. I may note in passing that in त्रैगुण्याविषयाः विषया is explained thus by Sri Madhwa विषः=poison या-dispellers. Then the word would mean *dispellers of the poison of samsara*. The natural meaning of the words in connection with the context which

deals with Karmayoga as higher than mere karmic life and as leading to Bhakti and Jnana has been already given by me.

यायानर्थ उदपाने सयत सप्सुतोदके ।

तायान्सर्वेषु यदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विज्ञानतः ॥ ४३ ॥

Whatever purpose can be attained by a small pond can be as surely attained in a large reservoir of water. Even so all the fruits described in all the Vedas are included and transcended in the fruit attained by the man of renunciation who is full of God realisation.

*Or* Just as in a large reservoir of water as well as in a small tank the thirsty man seeks only his object, (viz., the water needed to quench his thirst), so in all the Vedas the man seeking liberation has the same object (viz., the teaching that is the true and all sufficient means of Moksha)

#### NOTES

1 This verse has been a puzzle and many translators have made a mess of it. The two meanings above-said bring out two aspects of the thought contained in the stanza.

2. The Lord tells us why if Karmas lead to Samsara, Karmayoga should be done. It does not bind us. The bliss brought by it includes and transcends all the minor joys brought by the performance of the Vaidika Karmas. In this view the first of the two translations becomes full of meaning and beauty.

3. It has been said in the Sruti about Brahmananda “एतस्यैवानन्दस्यान्यानि भूतानि मात्रामुपजीवन्ति” “सोऽश्नुते सकलान् कामान् सह ब्रह्मणा विपश्चिता”

4 Sri Sankaracharya explains “Brahmana” as meaning *Sanyasi* Sri Ramanujacharya explains it as meaning *Vaidika*. Sri Madhwa explains it as meaning a knower of God. It does not mean one who is a mere Brahmin by birth

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।

मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥ ४७ ॥

Thy domain is work and not the fruits of work at any time. Do not be the source of further embodiment (as the result of action with desire for results) Neither do thou become addicted to inaction.

#### NOTES .

1. The selfish desire for pleasure of however



exalted a kind must go before we can have the grace of the Goddess of liberation (मोक्षलक्ष्मीकृपायुः). It is not abstention from karma that should be aimed at but abstention from motivated action which yields us only fleeting and potty results. It is *karma-yoga* that leads us to Bhakti and Jnana. *कपाये कर्मणि पजे तदा ज्ञान प्रपतत ॥*

There should be no giving up of duty. When the soul is full of God love and God realisation *karma* itself drops off. न कर्माणि क्षत्रेद्योगा कर्मभिस्त्वग्यते अघो, भुवस्त्वस्य पुण्यवत् ।

योगस्य कुरु कर्माणि सङ्ग त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।  
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्यो समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥

O Dhananjaya, do thy duties being rooted in *yoga* (i.e. as an act of worship of God), abandoning attachment, and same in success and in failure. Such evenness and equilibrium of mind is called *yoga*.

### NOTES

1 योगः सनत्नोपायम्यानसङ्कसिद्धियुक्तियुः Here *yoga* means *उपाय* (means). The duty should be done as enjoined by the Lord by way of glad fulfilment of his commands as an act of worship of God, renouncing all results to Him as *धीकृष्णार्पणमस्तु*, and

without even praying that He should show grace as a recompense for doing the duty.

दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनंजय ।  
बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः फलहेतवः ॥४९॥

Meie action is far inferior to the action done with the *buddhiyoga* above said. Seek refuge in such *buddhi* Pitiabie are those who work for the sake of results.

#### NOTES .

1. Pitiabie indeed is he who does not rise through Karmayoga to Bhakti and Jnana and thence to God-love and God-realisation The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says.

यो वा एतदक्षरं गार्ग्यविदित्वास्माल्लोकात्प्रैति स कृपणः ॥

See also

ययाचिरात्सर्वपापं व्यपोह्य परात्परं पुरुषमुपैति विद्वान् ॥

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते ।  
तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥

He who has this *Buddhi* casts off both good and evil deeds Therefore strive for such yoga. In the doing of deeds this *yoga* is of magical power.

## NOTES

1 Karma yoga has the magical property of transmuting deeds from being means of bondage into being means of freedom. As the *Ānandasiddhi* says.

पिताय सावतधारा मैत्रीमति न पोरताम् ॥

(If the thief is known and served he becomes a friend and ceases to be a thief)

कमज युधिमुक्ता दि फल स्वयत्या मनीषिणः ।

जन्मव धविनिमुक्ता पद गच्छन्त्यनामरम ॥ ५१ ॥

Those endowed with this *Puddhi* (karma-yoga), having renounced the fruits of actions attain wisdom and becoming liberated from the bondage of birth, attain the seat which is beyond all suffering

## NOTES

1 It is the mind that is the cause of bondage or leads to freedom. Then by *Karmayoga* the mind is purified and action is made a means of uplift and freedom and not a source of bondage. Then the soul is able to rise on the wings of *Bhakti* and *Jnana* and soar in the empyrean of divine Bliss.

2. अनामय ५८ *viz.*, Moksha. This is the Lord's gracious answer to Arjuna's request. „यच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे.” (Tell me what will be surely auspicious to me) .

3. Mark the steps in the golden ladder unto Moksha Karmayoga, giving up the fruits of actions, attainment of wisdom; freedom from the bondage of birth and the attainment of the Eternal bliss of God-realisation. As Sri Madhwa says well.

अकामनया ईश्वराय समर्प्य युक्तियुक्ताः सम्यग्ज्ञानिनो भूत्वा  
गच्छन्ति ।

यदा ते मोहकलिलं बुद्धिर्व्यतितरिष्यति ।

तदा गन्तासि निर्वेदं श्रोतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च ॥ ५२ ॥

When thy determinate reason shall cross the turbidity of illusion then shalt thou attain a calm satiety in regard to what may be heard by you and what has been heard by you.

### NOTES

1. The Lord sates when the Buddhi already described can be attained.

2 *Moha* is the illusion which clouds our sense of the eternal and the non-eternal and turns

us towards the objects of the senses in a passion of endless seeking

3 The scripture says

परीक्ष्य सोऽनूकमचित्तान् भास्यो निर्वेदमायात् ॥ (After examining the action a Brahmin should attain dispassion )

4 In the Yoga Sūtras Vairagya is thus defined in terms similar to those stated here by the Lord.

इष्टानुप्रविशतिपयवितृष्णस्य मतीश्चरसु वैराग्यम् ।

It is the Antaranga of प्रत्यक्षसमाधिः (inner means) and the Bahuranga (outer means) of असम्प्रज्ञातसमाधिः. Then comes the supreme state described in the Yoga sūtras thus: तत्परं पुरुषस्यादेष्टुमर्हत्तुल्यम् ।

5. Sri Ramanuja says that Karmayoga leads to Jñānayoga which leads to the realisation of the Jiva's (soul's) true nature. As I have already stated in the Advaita school this is the end of existence as Jiva and Brahma are one. Among the Viśiṣṭaśaivaitins such pure knowledge of the self leads to Bhakti and to the attainment of the Lord through Love, because self realisation naturally leads to God realisation.

6 Rāmakṛṣṇānanda quotes in his commentary the following beautiful stanza

यदिद मनसा वाचा चक्षुर्भ्यां श्रवणादिभिः ।  
नखर गृह्यमाणं च विद्धि माया मनोभयम् ॥

श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला ।  
समाधावचला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्स्यसि ॥ ५३ ॥

When thy determinate reason which was agitated by sacred texts (describing an infinite multitude of means and ends) stands unagitated and firm and is unshakeably rooted in the Supreme then will you attain *yoga* (God-realisation).

### NOTES

1 The Lord tells us when such wisdom will lead to God-realisation

2 Sri Madhwa holds that even among Muktas there are grades of bliss This is not admitted by the other schools.

अर्जुन उवाच

स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव ।  
स्थितधी किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत ब्रजेत किम् ॥

O Keshava ! How will a man who is of steadfast and realised wisdom and who has attained *samadhi* be described by others? How will his utterance be to others? How will he sit and behave and what will be his movements?

## NOTES

1 Arjuna now realising the highest illumination attained through Nishkama Karma and Bhakti and Jnana asks the Lord what will be the characteristics of the man of perfect realisation because the description of the nature of such a man is tantamount to the description of the means towards such attainment. Mukta Lakshanas are Mumukshu Sadhanas.

2. In short Arjuna asks of the Lord how a man of realised wisdom will be when in *Samadhi* (union with the Infinite) and when out of *Samadhi*.

3 The following beautiful verses in *Isha* show how in *Samadhi* and out of *Samadhi* the man of realised wisdom will be full of utter peace of spirit and ecstatic devotion.

यथत्सधारनालेऽग्निन् क्रियत कम भूमिष ।

तत्समाहितचित्तस्य सुखान्मान्यस्य नानथ ॥

निष्प्रयुद्धचित्तास्तु कुर्वन्तोऽपि जगत्क्रिया ।

आत्मैकतत्त्वसमिष्टाः सदैव सुप्रमाथय ॥

यद्गुणमासनश्चापि कृतवाद्याप्रसेनपि ।

अविमान्तस्वभावस्य क समाधि कर्ममया ॥

समाहिता निष्प्रयुक्ता यथाभूतार्थदर्शिनी ।

सदा समाधिचिन्तेन परा नरोऽप्यथ ध्रुवै ॥

4. In the Vâsishta the nature of the man of realised wisdom engaged in his duties when out of *Samudra* is thus beautifully described by comparison with the mental state of woman devoted in heart to her lover though doing all her household work.

परव्यसनिनी नारी व्यग्राऽपि गृहकर्मणि ॥

तदेवास्वादयन्त्यन्तः परसङ्गरसायनम् ॥

एव तत्त्वे परे शुद्धे धीरो विभ्रान्तिमागतः ।

तदेवास्वादयत्यन्तर्बहिर्व्यवहरन्नपि ॥

श्रीभगवानुवाच

प्रजहानि यदा कामान्सर्वान्पार्थ मनोगतान् ।

आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोष्यते ॥ ५५ ॥

When a man entirely renounces all the desires of the mind and rejoices by himself in the Self, he is described as a *Sthithaprayna* (a man of steady and realised) wisdom.

### NOTES

1. The remainder of this chapter is an answer to the above question by Arjuna

2. The renunciation of desires and of the petty fleeting pain-tinged joys born of their realisation does not mean a deadness of soul but means the attainment of Infinite Bliss



3. As already stated the description of the qualities of a *Mukta* is given as it is a description of the qualities of the *Mumukshu*. To the former they are natural, by the latter they are to be attained.

उत्तमोऽयमवस्थाऽद्वैतब्रह्मसंज्ञा ॥

ननु-ननु-इति न तु भाष्यकारेण ॥

1. This Stan. echoes the famous passage in the Upanishads.

ननु-ननु-इति न तु भाष्यकारेण ॥

अथ सर्वोद्भूता अवस्था मया वक्ष्यते ॥

2. There are seven planes (*भूमिः*) of *Samsara*. Of these the first three are said to correspond in the higher plane to our waking state (*जागृतवस्था*); the fourth is said to correspond to our *भ्रम* *स्था*; the fifth is the *सुषुप्ति* the sixth is the *गह* *प्रति* and the seventh is the *Juryarastha*. The man who has reached this highest stage is thus described in the Bhagavata.

इह न नमस्त्वयि नमस्तुभ्यं वा

विद्ये न पश्यति यताऽध्यगमास्तनम् ।

देवदुष्टमथ दैवपापयेत

सदा यथा परिहर्तुं मदिष्टमदाय ॥

3. The Veda declares that the man of realised renunciation attains the highest bliss *आनिवृत्त्याश्मद* *वस्य*

न केचन जगद्भावास्तत्त्वज्ञं रञ्जयन्त्यमी ।

नागरं नागरीकान्तं कुप्राभिललना इव ॥

7 Kama is due to sankalpa which is due to Vasana

काम जानामि ते मूलं सकल्पात्किल जायसे ।

By Nishkama Karma, Bhakti, and Jnana we must conquer them and attain the Ineffable and infinite Bliss of God-realisation

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।

वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥ ५६ ॥

He is called the sage of steadfast wisdom whose mind is not oppressed by the anguish of adversity, is devoid of yearning for pleasures, and is free from attachment, fear, and anger

### NOTES

1 The mind is not a mere theatre of fleeting sensations. It can be concentrated and purified so as to realise the Self. This method is called *yoga*.

2 This and the next stanza are the Lord's reply to Arjuna's question किं प्रभाषेत *उच्यते*, How will such a seer full of steady wisdom speak to others? This is Sri Madhusoodana's view. Verse 55 deals with the sage in *Samadhi* and the later verses deal with the sage out of *Samadhi*.

3 Sri Ramanujacharya's view is that verses 55 to 58 deal with the stages of perfection in the descending order. Sri Madhvacharya's view is that verses 56 to 58 elucidate the various *himsas* (desires) from which the seer is free. All the teachers are agreed that these and the succeeding verses up to the end of the chapter describe the seer of attained wisdom and realisation.

1 Sri Madhva says well प्रारम्भकर्मणा इपातिरा  
द्वितमद्वयो वासनया आवाल्यामिषमिषपूर्विका गमनादद्वयः समवन्ति

5 मुनि मननशीलः । one habitually given to thinking and contemplation

6 As already stated these descriptions of the seer are descriptions of the *Sadhana*s of the man eager for wisdom

विद्यास्थितये प्राप्य साधनभूता नयननिष्ठायाः ।  
सधनभूतास्तु पुनः समावृत्ये स्थिता स्थितप्रज्ञे ॥  
जीवन्मुक्तिरित्यामी नदन्यथस्यां स्थितारमसनोभाम् ।  
वाचितमेवप्रतिभामनापिचारमप्रयोपसामर्प्योत् ॥

Sri Sankaracharya says the same truth thus  
सद्यैव शब्दात्मशब्दे कृतायलक्षणाणि तान्यव साधनान्युपदिशन्ते ।

य सधनानमिज्ञेहस्तत्तत्प्राप्य शुभाशुभम् ।  
नामिनम्यति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ५७ ॥

His wisdom is well-rooted who is unattached in relation to all and who has not got rejoicing or aversion when he comes by auspicious or inauspicious consequences

### NOTES

1 This does not mean indifference to God. The object of detachment from worldly objects is to perfect our love of God. As Śrī Madhusoodana says well. भगवति परमात्मनि तु सर्वथाभिलेहवान् भवेदेव अनात्मलेहाभावस्य तदर्थत्वात् इति द्रष्टव्यम् ।

2 The conquest of the senses is not the deadening of the senses but their wise direction and control by a pure will.

यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ।  
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ५८ ॥

When as a tortoise draws in its limbs he withdraws his senses well from their objects, his wisdom attains perfect equipoise.

### NOTES

1. The simile is an illuminating simile and shows that as the tortoise naturally and without strain draws in its limbs, so a sage must attain a natural and easy mastery over the senses and attain the bliss of *Samadhi*. Neelakantha says that a

sage shrinks in fear from the touch of worldly illusions as a tortoise shrinks from rough contact

2 Sri Madhusoodana says that this and the next five verses answer Arjuna's question किमासीत च, How will the seer sit and behave? How will he when come out of Samadhi control his senses?

विषया विनिवर्तन्त निराहारस्य देहिना ।  
रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥७९॥

The objects of the senses turn back from him who practises abstinence. They however leave the relish behind. Even this disappears when the Supreme is realised

### NOTES

1 This stanza gives us a great spiritual truth. Only by renunciation and not by revelling in the senses can the scattered faculties of the mind be concentrated and purified. Even then the relish for the fleeting things of life remains owing to long revelling in them. The relish can cease to be only when the sweetest sweetness of God love and God realisation shines in our hearts

2. आहारः Whatever is brought in to any of the senses निराहारस्य विप्रवेक्ष्य मत्प्राप्तोन्मिषस्य (Sri Ramanjacharya)

3. The Bhagavata says

इन्द्रियाणि जयन्त्याशु निराहारा मनीषिण ।  
वर्जयित्वा तु रसनामसौ रस्ये तु वर्धते ॥

4. Sri Ramanuja says that this verse shows the difficulty of the attainment of Jnana Nishtha and the means of its attainment

5 Sri Sankara says that this verse shows that one who by effort closes the doors of the senses can keep out the objects but the taste and relish for these will remain God-vision will accomplish this conquest of relish and desire

यततो ह्यपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपरिचतः ।

इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभं मनः ॥ ६० ॥

O son of Kuntī, even in the case of a striving and wise man, the turbulent senses impetuously snatch away his mind

#### NOTES

1 This verse describes an intermediate stage—not pure *sattva* or mere *tamas*. It describes not the seer or the sleeper but the scholar It describes the urgent need of बाह्येन्द्रियनिग्रह.

2. The Lord says that mighty effort and prayer and devotion will on the one hand slowly lessen the hold of the senses on us and on the other

hand bring us nearer to the attainment of God vision which alone will finally lead to the conquest of the senses and the subduing of the relish for worldly enjoyments.

3 The power of the senses is thus described in Manu Chap. II Verses 215

माया स्वप्ना दुर्हिता वा न विविक्षासो भवेत् ।

यत्प्राप्तिं श्रयमासा विद्वानपि ऋति ॥

1 Viveka (discrimination) is the king and Yajna (effort) is the minister With their help and the help of the army of prayer and devotion and good thoughts and words and deeds we must beat off the investing armies of the senses

तानि सर्वाणि सम्यक् युक्त आसीत् मत्पर ।

यशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ६१ ॥

He should well control them all and sit in tranquil meditation regarding Me as the Supreme. His wisdom is steady whose senses are under his control

### NOTES

1 If we seek the help of the king the thieves do not hurt us but become our servants So if we seek and get the Lord's grace, the senses will not

degrade us but will be our servants, serviceable and pure.

न वासुदेवभक्तानामशुभ विद्यते क्वचित् ।  
 निलोत्सवो भवेत्तेषां नित्यश्रीर्नित्यमङ्गलम् ।  
 येषां मनःस्थो भगवान्मङ्गलायतनं हरिः ॥  
 लाभस्तेषां जयस्तेषां कुंतस्तेषां पराभवः ।  
 येषामिन्दोवरक्ष्यामो हृदये सुप्रतिष्ठितः ॥

2 God-love leads to conquest of the senses and leads to God-vision.

3 The Katha Upanishad says well

विज्ञानसारार्थिर्यस्तु मन प्रग्रहवान्नरः ।  
 सोऽव्ययः पारमाप्नोति तद्विष्णो परमं पदम् ॥  
 यथाग्निश्चक्षुः शिखः कक्षं दहति सानिलः ।  
 तथा चित्तस्थितो विष्णुर्योगिना सर्वकिल्बिषम् ॥

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गरोधूपजायते ।  
 सङ्गत्संजायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥

क्रोधाद्भवति संमोहः संमोहात् एतद्विभ्रमः ।  
 एतद्विभ्रंशाद्बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥ ६३ ॥

Attachment to objects is born of musing on them; desire is born of attachment, anger is born of desire; delusion comes from anger, loss of memory results from delusion; from loss of



memory comes the ruin of discrimination, and through the ruin of discrimination he is lost

### NOTES

1 वायन्द्रियनिग्रह (control of the outer senses) by itself is of no use because mental contemplation of the objects will lead to attachment and eventually to moral destruction. Hence मनोनिग्रह is equally essential

2. The *Sam-kara* of *Bhavana* is the basis of knowledge and that of *smṛti* is the basis of memory. The *samskāra* (mental impression) of *smṛti* (memory) is at the very basis of our conceptual and discriminative thought. When therefore intense passion clouds our memory eventually our discriminative power which alone can distinguish right and wrong is lost. Such loss is the real loss of the man himself, because then he loses his *Puruṣārtha*, and what greater loss can there be than the loss of the goal of existence?

रागद्वेषयियुक्तेस्तु पितृपुत्रानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।

भारमपश्येयिष्यारमा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥ ६४ ॥

But the man of disciplined mind, moving among the objects with senses free from desire and anger and controlled by himself, attains peace and clarity of soul

## NOTES:

1. The *Yoga Sastras* describe these methods fully and clearly.

2. This and the succeeding 7 verses are an answer to Arjuna's question किं व्रजेत । What will be the seer's attitude to the objects of the senses ?

3. Such मनःप्रसाद (mental equipoise and purity) alone leads to God-vision

प्रसादे सर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।  
प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥ ६५ ॥

When such mental peace and purity are attained, the extinction of all sorrow is attained. The discriminative faculty of him whose mind has attained peace and purity is self-poised and steadfast.

नास्ति बुद्धिरयुक्तस्य न चायुक्तस्य भावना ।  
न चाभावयतः शान्तिरशान्तस्य कुतः सुखम् ॥

The knowledge of Atman comes not to him who has not attained mental equilibrium. To him who has not attained mental equilibrium comes not the uninterrupted meditation of the Self To him who has not attained such meditation comes not the great peace of realisation.

To him who has not attained such peace,  
whence can come the bliss of Moksha?

### NOTES.

1 This verse shows the great truth that प्रवण मनन and निदिध्यासन lead to राधास्कार and मोक्षान-

2 Only the pure in heart shall see God—that is the substance of the Lord's teaching here.

3. सुख means happiness and not pleasure. There could be no iota of joy while passion exists. Sri Sankaracharya says इन्द्रियाणां विषयसेवातृष्णाता निवृत्तिया तत् सुखं न विषयविषया तृष्णा दुःखमेव हि सा न तृष्णायां सखां मुखस्य गन्धमासमुत्पद्यत इत्यथ । The turning back of the senses from the seeking of objects is joy. The desire for objects is not joy but pain.

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरता यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते ।  
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां पायुर्नावभिधात्मसि ॥ ६७ ॥

The mind which follows blindly in the wake of the roving senses carries away the faculty of discrimination as a storm carries away a boat upon the ocean.

तस्माद्यस्य महाबाहो निवृत्तानि सर्वदाः ॥  
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तत्प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ ६८ ॥

Therefore, O mighty-armed, the wisdom of that man is steadfast, all of whose senses are restrained from all their objects.

### NOTES

1 Even if one sense is indulged, the succession of disasters already described will follow

2 By calling Arjuna "mighty-armed" the Lord invites him to his self-conquest also.

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।  
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥

In the time which is night to all beings, the self-controlled man is awake The time wherein all beings are awake is the time of sleep for the sage of true vision.

### NOTES

1. The Lord contrasts here in felicitous terms the knower and the ignorant man The night of the ignorant is wisdom because they see nothing in it In such a night of wisdom the sage is awake The day of the ignorant is that dense darkness of *avidya* where like owls the ignorant keep up a fitful activity. In relation to such dense darkness the attitude of the sage full of the light of god-realisation is the attitude of one to the

darkness of night—a feeling of dissatisfaction and a desire to turn away from it

2 The meaning may also be put tersely thus—God is like dark night to us but the sage sees Him and enjoys Him like day. The world is like day to us but the sage moves in it as in a dark night

3 The Scripture declares

यदा पद्मानतिष्ठन्ते ज्ञानानि मनसा सह ।  
बुद्धिश्च निविचेष्टेत सामाहुः परमां गतिम् ॥

4 Sri Sankara says well that in the presence of jnana avidya disappears विद्यायां हि सज्जामुदिते सवि-  
तरि धामराशेभ्य तम उजाग्रमुपगच्छत्यविद्या ।

5 The Vartikakara says

अरक्त्ववहारे हि शुद्धं वस्तु न वीक्ष्यते ।  
शुद्धे वस्तुनि सिद्धे च अरक्त्वाद्वातिष्ठत्या ॥  
आकोल्यनिर्देशनाय ससारोऽस्तमवेदिनो ।  
या निष्ठा सर्वभूतानामिच्छनोऽस्तम इति ॥

6 The realisation of the unity of everything is thus described by the Scripture यत्र वा अन्यदिन-  
त्पातत्रान्योऽन्यत्पश्येत् यत्र स्वस्य सर्वमात्मैवामूर्त तत्त्वेन कं पश्येत् ।

आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठ  
समुद्रमापः प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् ।



He who gives up all desires and lives in dispassion, without selfishness and egotism attaineth peace

## NOTES

1 शान्ति—Moksha सर्वसंसारदुःखोपरमत्वक्षणां (Sri Sankara)

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पाथ नैना प्राप्य विमुक्षति ।  
स्थित्यास्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्म निधानमृच्छति ॥

This is the Brahmic state, O Partha, on attaining which illusion ceases and by being steadfast in which, even at the close of his life, a man attains the bliss of God realisation

## NOTES

1 Sri Ramanuja says well निवाणमन ब्रह्म गच्छति । मुक्तैकानमरमानमाप्नोतीत्ययः । (Attain the bliss of the Atman)

2. Parikshit attained such bliss and Khatvanga also attained the bliss of realisation of God at the end of their lives as stated in the Bhagavata.

विज्ञाय चरमान्तां देवताभ्यो नृपोत्तमः ।

सद्ब्राह्मो नाम राजर्षिमुद्भूते सुखमेयिवान् ॥

Thus ends the Chapter SANKHYA YOGA

## CHAPTER III

### Karma Yoga.

अर्जुन उवाच

ज्यायसी चैत्कर्म्मणस्ते मता बुद्धिर्जनार्दन ।  
तर्त्तिक कर्मणि घोरे मां नियोजयसि केशव ॥ १ ॥

व्यामिश्रेणेव वाक्येन बुद्धिं मोहयसीव मे ।  
तदेकं वद निश्चित्य येन श्रेयोऽहमाप्नुयाम् ॥ २ ॥

It, O Janârdana, Buddhi (Jnana or wisdom) is regarded by thee as superior to karma (action) why, O Kesava, dost thou order me to do this cruel work ? With speech which seems to be confused and perplexing you seem to bewilder my mind. Therefore tell me with certainty that one thing, by which I can reach the highest good.

#### NOTES

1. The Lord had closed Chapter II with the praise of the Brâhmisthiti which is the consummation of the Sâmkhyayoga. In the earlier portions of Chapter II He had praised the Karmayoga also. Arjuna wants to have a clear idea of the inter-



connection and graduatedness of these two holy and auspicious paths

2 The Gita is a *Samviti* wherein by means of a dialogue truth is brought home to the hearer's mind. It is a more natural and effective method than mere exposition or dialectics

3 Sri Sankaracharya shows that the opening portion of this Chapter shows the diverseness of Jnana and Karma and the certainty of Jnana being the sole means of self realisation. If Jnana and Karma are equally necessary would Arjuna, who is a pure and qualified disciple regard them as separate and disconnected? Would the Lord reply in the same strain treating them so? Moksha is not a result of action. It is a realisation मोक्षश्चाक्यत्यागमुमुक्षा कमानर्थक्यम् । The mere non-doing which is a negative thing cannot produce a positive result. *Sastra* is शस्त्रम् (reminding agency) and not कर्म (an agency enjoining action). Hence Karma and Jnana have reference to workers on two different planes (भिन्नपुरुषानिष्ठेय)

4 The steps in the golden ladder of self realisation are 'bravely beautifully described by Sri Madhva Soodana एव तावदध्यमेनाप्यायेन उपोदयति ता द्वितीयेनाप्यायेन इत्यन्यथा च । तया हि वादी निष्कामकर्मनिष्ठा तता

ऽन्तःकरणशुद्धिः ततः शमदमादिसाधनपुरःसरः सर्वकर्मसंन्यासः ततो वेदान्तवाक्यविचारसहिता भगवद्भक्तिनिष्ठा ततस्तत्त्वज्ञाननिष्ठा तस्या फलं च त्रिगुणात्मकाविद्यानिवृत्त्या जीवन्मुक्तिः प्रारब्धकर्मफलभोगपर्यन्तं तदन्ते च विदेहमुक्तिः । जीवन्मुक्तिदशाया च परमपुरुषार्थावलम्बनेन परवैराग्यप्राप्तिः दैवसंपदाख्या च शुभवासना तदुपकारिण्यादेया । आसुरसंपदाख्या तु अशुभवासना तद्विरोधिनी हेया । दैवसंपदोऽसाधारण कारणं सात्त्विकी श्रद्धा आसुरसंपदस्तु राजसी तामसी चेति हेयोपादेयविभागेन कृत्स्नशास्त्रार्थपरिसमाप्तिः ।

5 Thus Madhusoodana points out that the entire Sastra is stated in a nutshell in Chapter II. Nishkkaîma Karma is dealt with in detail in Chapter III and IV. In Chapters V and VI is described Sarva Karma Sanyasa due to the pure mind perfected by *sama*, *dama*, etc. Thus in Chapters I to VI त्व-पदार्थ (the soul) is clearly described to us तत्पदार्थ (God) is described in Chapters VII to XII. In Chapter XIII the identity of तत् and त्व (God and soul) is shown. In Chapter XIV we are taught त्रैगुण्यनिवृत्तिः. In Chapter XV Daivi Sampat which is the supreme guide of परवैराग्य is shown. In Chapter XVI and XVII the Sattviki Sraddha leading to दैवी संपत् and its opposite are described. Thus in Chapters XIII to XVII we are taught सफला ज्ञाननिष्ठा. In Chapter XVIII we have the उपसंहार the conclusion and summation of the teachings of the Gita.

6 Sri Ramanuja says that the knowledge of the soul is a means to Bhakti and that Chapters II to VI describe the realisation of the soul as a means to Bhakti

7 Professor Rangachariar's interpretation of *Buddhi* as the disposition of the mind is quite against the trend of the teachings in Chapter II. Arjuna regards the choice as a choice between *Karma marga* and *Jnana marga* and not as one between action and motive

8 Sri Madhwacharya says that the action regarded as lower than Jnana is only mercenary action (कर्मकर्म). The discussions bearing on this in Mr Padmanabhachariar's book on the Gita show more subtlety than truth. All are agreed that liberation is through wisdom and that karma is a means to wisdom. Hence karma without love of fruit is higher than Karma with love of fruit but is lower than wisdom because each higher plane is necessarily above each lower plane

9 Professor Rangachariar's translation of (निश्चिन्ना) or "after ascertaining well" does not seem to be quite correct as 'it could imply a doubt in Arjuna's mind about Sri Krishna's knowing the truth well

## श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

लोकेऽस्मिन्द्विविधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मया नम ।  
ज्ञानयोगेन सांख्यानं कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम् ॥ ३ ॥

The Blessed Lord said-

In the beginning (of creation), O sinless one, the twofold path was taught by me in this world -the path of wisdom for the Sankhyas and the path of Karma Yoga for the Yogins.

### NOTES

1 The Lord here shows the distinction of path (मार्ग) according to the distinction of Adhikari. Sri Venkatanatha says in his Brahmanandagiri जन्मान्तरसुकृतवशात्स्वतः शुद्धान्तकरणस्य साक्षाज्ज्ञान एव स्थितिः । अतथाभूतस्य तु चित्तशुद्धिपर्यन्तं ज्ञानाङ्गे कर्मणि स्थितिरिति ।

2 Sri Madhwacharya instances Sanaka and Janaka as instances of the ज्ञानयोगि and कर्मयोगि respectively द्विविधा अपि जनाः सन्ति । गृहस्थादि कर्मत्यागेन ज्ञाननिष्ठाः सनकादिवत् । तस्या एव ज्ञाननिष्ठाश्च जनकादिवत् । मध्वमस्या एवेत्यर्थः ।

3 There is no inconsistency in these views. A person becomes fit for ज्ञान only through karma

Among those who are full of Jnana, some are like Sanaka and some like Janaka

4 Sri Ramanujacharya says well न हि सर्वो लौकिकः पुरुषः समातमोक्षामिक्षाय तदानीमेव ज्ञानयोगाधिकारे प्रभवति । अपि त्वनामिक्षादितफलन केवलपरमपुरुषाराधनवेद्येभानुष्ठितेन कर्मणा विष्वस्तस्यान्तमलाऽभ्याकुलेन्द्रिया ज्ञाननिष्ठायामधिकरोति ।

5 The absolute need for purification through Karma is thus strongly laid down in the following verses.

अनभीक्ष्व क्षिप्ताम्बेदाग्रनिष्ठैवाक्षितान्धुरान् ।  
अनुत्पाद्य सुतान्विश्रो न सम्यासिद्धमहति ॥  
अकुर्वन्निहित कर्म निमित्त न समाचरन् ।  
अथराधेन्द्रियाद्येषु नरः पतनमृच्छति ॥

It is said further

परमज्ञ परिज्ञाय नमजेन्द्राद्युत्तम ।  
अन्यथा कर्म कुर्वीत न प्रमायेत कर्हिचित् ॥  
स्व स्वऽधिकारे वा निष्ठा सगुण परिकीर्तितः ।  
विपरीतस्तु दोष आहुमयोरेष निश्चयः ॥

न कर्मणामनारम्भाज्ञैर्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽन्तुते ।  
न च सन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥ ४ ॥

Man does not enjoy self poised freedom from action by abstention from action nor does

he attain the realisation of wisdom by mere, cessation from action

### NOTES

1 The Lord answers an unexpressed question by Arjuna as to why if the two paths of work and of wisdom are to be followed by men of two different types of attainment he should be directed to follow the path of action

2 The nexus of tendencies and results known as Karma has to be unwound and cast off by the processes of selfless duty, devotion, concentration and wisdom, and cannot be overcome by mere quiescence and quietism. Mere quietism may bring about a state of inactivity of the senses but the impurity and sinfulness of the mind will increase by morbid thought about sense-contacts and sense-pleasures. It is not work that binds but it is motived work that binds. The *Isavasyopanishad* says

कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिर्जिविषेच्छते समाः ।  
एवं त्वयि नान्यथेतोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरे ॥

3 It has been well said

ज्ञानमुत्पद्यते पुंसां क्षयात्पापस्य कर्मणः ।  
यथादर्शितलभ्ये परयत्यात्मानमात्मनि ॥  
अमय सर्वभूतेभ्यो दत्त्वा नैष्कर्म्यमाचरेत् ।

1 Sri Ramanuja says thus in a beautiful sentence about this truth अनभिसंहितकृताः कमभिरनापि विवर्गेविन्देतिवचनादिकारप्रदानन्तपापघनदेव्याकुलेन्द्रियतापूर्वाभरमनिष्ठा दुःखादा ।

The same idea is tersely stated by Sri Sankara thus कारम्मस्यैव नेष्कर्म्योपायत्वात् ।

न हि कश्चित्सुखमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।  
कायते ह्यपरा कम सर्वा प्रकृतिर्जैर्गुणैः ॥ ५ ॥

Verily no one can for even a moment rest without doing any action For every one is driven to action irresistibly by the *Gunas* (qualities) inherent in *Prakriti*

### NOTES

1 The *Prakriti Gunas* drive us to action Hence to attain self poise and bliss by cessation from action is useless, for the cause *vi* *Prakriti Gunas* remain unsubdued We must overcome the cause to subdue the effect.

2. Sri Ramanuja points out that by past *Karmas* the *sāttvic*, *rājasic* and *tāmasic* element in us have been fed and are in full and vigorous operation and cannot be overcome by inaction but only by *Dharmic Karma*

प्रकृतिधर्मैः सत्त्वरजस्तमोभिः प्राप्तीनकर्मानुगुणप्रवृत्तैर्गुणैः ।

3. If mere inaction can procure salvation then trees would be liberated souls Sri Madhwa says well यदि कर्मकरणेन मुक्तिः स्यात् स्थावराणाम्

4 God-realisation leads to liberation and it cannot come till *Karma* is vanquished by Dharma

अतोऽविच्छा परं देव मोक्षाशा का महामुने ।

निष्काम ज्ञानपूर्वं तु निवृत्तमिति चोच्यते ।

निवृत्त सेवमानस्तु ब्रह्माभ्येति सनातनम् ॥

The Bhagavata says

कर्मभिः शुद्धसत्त्वस्य वैराग्यं जायते हृदि ।

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन् ।

इन्द्रियार्थान्विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते ॥ ६ ॥

He who restraining well the organs of action sits contemplating in his mind the objects of the senses is of deluded understanding and is called a hypocrite

### NOTES

1 The idea is well stated by Sri Venkatanatha thus अतश्चित्तशुध्यभावे केवलकर्मेन्द्रियनिग्रहमात्रस्यानर्थकरत्वात् तद्रूपः संन्यासः ।

यस्त्विन्द्रियाणि मनसा नियम्यारमतेऽर्जुन ।

कर्मेन्द्रियैः कर्मयोगमसक्तः स विशिष्यते ॥ ७ ॥



But O Arjuna! he who, controlling the senses by the mind, begins and performs karma yoga by the organs of action in a spirit of non-attachment excels (the impostor described above)

### NOTES

1 The man who desires to dwell in an upper storey must build the basement and the first floor. Even so must the man yearning for the self peace and bliss of Moksha do Nishkama karma.

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्वारो ह्यकर्मणः ।  
अरीर्यानापि च ते न प्रसिद्ध्यदकर्मणः ॥ ८ ॥

Perform thou the obligatory duties because action is superior to inaction. If thou art inactive even the preservation of thy body could not be achieved.

### NOTES

1 The Hindu view is that the body should be preserved in full vitality because it is through Karma that the soul mounts up devotion and wisdom which lead to self liberation and self realization. Sri Ramanauja says well यत्कर्मसुखमसुखमिदं शरीरधारणं चावश्यं कथम् ।

2. If work causes bondage higher and purer

3. Professor Rangachariar tries to bring into his exposition the conclusions of the faithful student of our religion and the faithful student of comparative religion. The faithful student of our religion is a devotee whose clarity of vision is the result of his faith. The student of comparative religion is like a pedagogue asking each religion in the world to stand up and deliver an account of itself. While a pedagogue deals with living boys, the student of comparative religion deals with mummies and living boys in the shape of dead and living religions and has a special fondness for the former. The two methods of treatment are best kept apart. Sri Krishna emphasises the supreme need of sacrifice as a purifier and uplifter of the soul. We cannot allow His doctrine to be weakened by references to any tentative conclusions propounded by the bumptious pedagogue of comparative religion.

4. What is *यज्ञः*? Some take it in the larger sense of unselfish action in general and others take it in the narrower sense of sacrifices. Here the latter meaning is the more appropriate having regard to the text and the context. Our religion emphasises the need for a moral and unselfish life of service to man even more than other religions. But that is the matter for exposition elsewhere.

Here the Lord deals with the question of offerings to the Devas. Unselfish service to man no doubt pleases them. But in the case of the Gods who give everything to us what can we give and what do we give to them? In the case of our relations and friends who give a little to us we owe a deep debt of gratitude and seek to repay it by service and love. In the case of the Gods who give us everything—nay sustain life for us even when we are in deep sleep—what can we give? Scripture which alone declares beyond doubt their existence and nature tells us how to please them. We can only give them a fraction of what they have provided in plenty for us. It is not the giving that is of importance as much as the spirit of the giving. What is given to them as a sacrificial love-offering is again given to us by them with renewed and increased sustaining purifying and uplifting power. Food eaten by us without being offered to them will be as much subject to the processes of digestion and assimilation as the food offered to them. But in the former case our appropriation of what they give is hardly a decent act worthy of self-respecting beings. In the latter case our sacrificial act declares and proves our gratitude and is sure to result in the sacrificial love-offering.

coming back to us with added fruitfulness and blessedness As Prahlada says beautifully

नैवात्मन प्रभुरयं निजलामपूर्णं

मानं जनादविदुष कुरुणो वृणीते ।

यद्यज्जनो भगवते विदधीत मानं

तच्चात्मने प्रतिमुखस्य यथा मुखश्री ॥

5 But are there such gods or divine agencies in nature? The final and incontrovertible evidence about their existence is in Scripture शास्त्रयोनित्वात् From the standpoint of reason we can well see that in the case of human phenomena will is the cause of design, order, symmetry, etc In nature we see design, order etc What right have you to say that there is no operation of will there? What right have you to ascribe them to chance or to un-intelligent nature? Have you seen in the world of human phenomena anything to justify your ascription of such a cause to the natural phenomena? Again, will and radiance and energy co-exist in the case of the kingdom of man You find intenser radiance and power in the world of nature On what basis do you deny the co-existence of will and intelligence in relation to them? On the other hand if the function of logic is to proceed from the known to the un-known, you should ascribe such higher and intenser radiance and energy to higher

and intenser will and intelligence. You say that the gods should manifest themselves before your vision. Are they school boys to obey the call of you their pedagogue? In the case of the lower energies of nature you are willing to take the intermediate steps required for the direct perception of such energies. If you want to make electricity to light your room you do not issue a verbal command to it to do so. You generate it you store it and then you apply the proper switch. Should you not take the proper steps required for the realisation and perception of the higher energies of life? *Mantras* and *lapas* and meditation and devotion are the means for the realisation and perception of the divine spiritual energies of life. Emotion and intuition and the ethical sense are certainly at least as valuable elements of us as reason and their affirmations should not be ignored.

6 The divine agencies in the universe preside over nature's energies and over the even more wonderful energies of the senses and are great *bhaktas* who are *adhikarikus* or powers entrusted with certain special tasks of guidance and control by the command of the supreme Isvara. Remember the life of Dhruva. MaxMüller's view that

we have transferred to natural phenomena the principle of life in us by an illogical shifting of centre is absurd. Our view is not that sages were children playing with the facts of life as dolls. In respect of the facts of nature and the functions of life science merely gives a long name and a longer description and calls these an explanation of their cause. We say that the divine agencies are the causes and that the physical predecessors of effects are only preliminary effects of other causes though science dignifies these as causes. Suppose a man loses his sight through small pox. You say that small pox is the cause of the loss of vision. I say that the sun who is inspirer and illuminer of the power of vision has withdrawn his *anugraha* grace owing to our sin and the first effect is small pox and the second effect is blindness. Max Muller's *henotherism* theory is equally absurd as he seems to think that mankind ran in blinkers seeing only one thing at a time or that the Gods were made to come into the field of vision one after another by the gyrating machinery of a spiritual bioscope. Our Vedas tell us एक सद्दिशं बहुधा वदन्ति. The sages call each god the Supreme Isvara. If man could be divine why could not the deities presiding over the different energies of nature be realised as the Supreme Lord? Such

theories as there are only one at p removed from blindness of vision when compared with such ridiculous theories as those propounded by Mr T Iyaramasiva Iyer about the Veda embodying geological facts e.g. that Gayatri is marsh gas etc

7 Vaishnavas concentrate their gaze on the universal Lord who is the summation of all aspects of creative preservative and destructive power. Smarthas devote their love and attention to Him as well as the various aspects above said which are the various gods with scripture declared forms and powers. There are some Vaishnavas who are devotees of these as well.

8 There is a certain significance in the offering of food to the Gods. The beauty of the golden corn is lost upon us like the beauty of the sun as familiarity breeds contempt. The sweetest thing in life is food. Indeed we express other needs by the terms hunger appetite etc. if there is any divine element in life it must attach to what is the main bulk of life's action by eating and marriage leading to self preservation and race preservation. If one is asked to choose between going without food for three days and going without votes for three months there would not be a moment's hesitation about the choice. Food

is taken to sustain life. The sense of taste acts as the doorkeeper allowing healthful things alone to go in. So far as the primary need of life is concerned if we can have an external selective agency the sense of taste might as well be abolished. If food be taken for mere enjoyment, we should always keep it on the tongue. We should surrender to the gods what we hold dearest because such an act brings about a threefold blessing: it generates in us habits of detachment, dispassion, and unselfishness, it pleases the gods who give us in abundance the things that sustain, delight and purify life, and what is offered comes back to us with an added power of gracious blessing. Is it anything wonderful that we should have a sacramental conception of food? Indeed any other conception of it would be ungrateful or hardly even decent. Food should be pure, prepared by pure hands, free from impurity of environments, warm and rendered even purer by *mantras*. It should then be offered to God and then partaken by us.

9. Thus it is through sacrifices that we learn our first lessons in the finest art of life—the art of unselfish and active and dispassionate blessedness. Sacrifice for blessings here and hereafter eventually leads us to work in a spirit of detachment and as a love-offering to God. The spiral of ascent is like this



Sacrifice teaches us dependence on a higher power and lessens our ravenous sense of proprietorship चर is दत्तार्पण इत्यस्मात् (Giving up wealth for the sake of God). The emotion of gratitude soon ripens into the higher emotion of love. The emotion of brotherhood is generated and intensified by sharing with our fellow worshippers the food offered to God. Slowly the energies of dispassion and detachment and love fructify in us till the true spirit of Karma Yoga—सर्वे कृष्णार्पणस्तु—is realised by us and this leads us to the supreme heights of God Love and God realisation (*Ihakti and Jnana*). Hence the highest peaks of the inner life really rest on the solid ground of a proper scheme of life as work and sacrifice.

10 सहयज्ञे is another reading for सहयज्ञः. Both the readings mean the same thing. The former means that mankind and sacrifice were created simultaneously and the latter suggests that they were indissolubly bound one to the other. Sacrifice is the means to attainment. The good things of life come of their own accord though the sacrificer has his eye on God and not on them just as though a man plants a mango tree for fruits, he gets fragrance and shade as well. Even if they do not come there is the supreme blessedness of loyalty to Dharma. As Apastamba says

तद्ययात्रे फलार्थे निर्मिते छाया गन्व इत्यनूत्पद्यते एवं धर्मे चर्यमाणं  
अर्या अनूत्पद्यन्ते नो चेदनूत्पद्यन्ते न हानिर्भवति ॥

11. Sri Ramanujacharya well points out that at the beginning of creation God gave sacrifice to the human soul as the chart of life so that the soul may be freed from its accumulated load of karma.

पुरा सर्गकाले स भगवान् प्रजापतिः. अनादिकालप्रवृत्ताचित्संसर्ग-  
विवशा उपसंहृतनामरूपविभागाः स्वस्मिन्-प्रलीनाः सकलपुरुषार्थानर्हाश्चेत-  
नेतरकल्पाः प्रजाः समीक्ष्य परमकारुणिकस्तदुज्जीवयिषया स्वाराधनभूत-  
यज्ञनिर्वृतये यज्ञैः सह ताः सृष्ट्वैवमुवाच ॥

12 इष्टकाम- includes also Moksha. Actions and sacrifices done in a spirit of love of results brings such results. If done in a spirit of detachment and as a love-offering to God they bring to us the result of Moksha through *chittasuddhi* and *bhakti* and *jnana*.

देवान्भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः ।

परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ॥ ११ ॥

Nourish and gladden the *Devas* (gods) with this, and may they nourish and gladden you. Thus nourishing and gladdening one other, you shall attain the highest good.

### NOTES

1. The gods govern and guide the cosmic

functions. Sacrifice is the means of their propitiation and will lead us into the realm of bounteous blessedness.

2. Sri Ramanujacharya says that the Supreme God accepts all offerings and every worship भद्रं हि तदयशानां नाशाय च प्रभुर्वै च ।

3. Sri Shankaracharya says that धर्म तत् means Moksha through Jnana which results from Nishkamakarma or merely *Seva* (heaven). That heaven exists is clear because such enjoyments as unfading youth and unfading flowers (अमृतानुष्वादि) do not exist on earth.

4. Raghavendra Swami treats the command as applicable to the lower gods and to men to fulfil duties and thereby to attain the bliss of God-realisation.

5. The relation between sacrifice and prosperity is thus stated

भक्तो प्रास्तावुति सम्यगादित्यमुतिष्ठति ।

आदित्यायत यद्विरहेत्त ततः प्रभः ॥

6. Balidasa says well in *Rajhucanana* दुष्टाहं नां स यस्याय सस्याय मयथा दिवम् । सपत्निमयनोभौ दधतुमुपनयनम् ॥

इष्टाभोगानिदं धा देवा दाम्यन्ते यद्व्याधिताः ।

तेदत्तानप्रदायेभ्यो यो भुङ्क्ते स्तेन एव वा ॥ १२ ॥

The deities thus nourished and gladdened by sacrifice will give you all desired enjoyments. He who enjoys what is given by them without offering the same to them is verily a thief.

### NOTES

1 Selfish enjoyment of wealth is both anti-social and irreligious and has further a corrupting effect on individual purity and goodness. From the social point of view wealth is a trust for society. From the religious point of view it is a blessing from above. It should be offered to God and then enjoyed as his grace, and it is a trust in our hands for his other children also.

2 स्तेन is interpreted by Sri Sankara as देवादि-स्वापहारी (who purloins the property of the gods and does not take the same as a free and glad gift).

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः ।

भुञ्जते ते त्वघ पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात् ॥ १३ ॥

The righteous who eat the food remaining after offering as sacrifice are freed from all sins, but the sinful ones who cook for their own sakes are eating only sin.

### NOTES

1 Here we have a sacramental conception

of food. The illogical modern man is glad when he is told that the human body is the temple of God but demurs to the sacramental conception of food which builds up the body. The divine pity of the Lord for man is seen in His giving us in the Gita not merely the ultimate truths of the spirit but also the holy means of God-realisation including the elementary but all important means of purity of food.

2. *Itascadera* is believed to remove the पक्षसूना दोषाः (the evils inevitably attendant on cooking processes).

कण्डली पयसी चुन्नी उदङ्गमी च मार्जनी ।  
पक्षसूना गृहस्थस्य तामि स्वर्गे न निन्दति ॥

पक्षसूना कृत दोषं पक्षमर्ह्यपीदति ॥

3. The following passages in Scripture may also be remembered in this connection. इवमवाप्त्य तत्सा भार्गवर्षं यदिदमद्यत स य एतदुपास्य न स पाप्मनो व्यावर्तते मिथ ह्येतत् ।

माघमघ चिन्दते अग्रवंता सस्य व्रणीमि वच शस तस्य ।  
वार्धमज पुष्यति नो सञ्जाय केयलांभो मयति केयलादी ॥

अन्नाद्भवन्ति भूतानि पक्ष्म्यादन्नसमघा ।  
यस्याद्भवति पक्ष्म्यो यच्च कर्मसमुद्भव ॥ १४ ॥



4 Sri Ramanuja says that Brahma means body and Akshara means Jiva. This would mean that actions are done by the ensouled body and that hence the body which is *Sarragata* i.e. a universal phenomenon depends on sacrifices for its being.

5 Sri Madhwacharya interprets Brahma as God and Akshara as the Veda. God proceeds from the Veda because He is revealed by it. *ब्राह्मयोनिस्त्वाम्* (Brahma Sūtras I 1 3)

6 Sankarananda will say *एव वृक्षमद्वारा जगन्मी ननहनुयो यद्* ।

7 Sri Venkatanatha says that the infinite variety of fruits in the universe is due to the variety of actions and motives. God being the uniform and impartial agent assigning fruits to actions, like the rain that enables each seed to sprout according to its nature.

8 Veda is called सर्वगत it illumines everything and embraces the entire cosmic life.

*एष प्रवर्तित चक्र नानुवर्त्यतीह यः ।*

*मधायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघ पार्थ स जीवति ॥ १६ ॥*

He who doth not follow in this world the cosmic wheel thus set in motion who liveth in

sin, and who rejoiceth in the life of the senses,  
he lives in vain, O Partha

### NOTES

1. इन्द्रियाराम contrasted with धर्माराम and आत्माराम

2 Sri Madhusoodana refers in this connection to the Sruti अथो अयं वा आत्मा भूतानां लोकः स यज्जुहोति यद्यजते तेन देवानां लोकेऽथ यदनुब्रूते तेन ऋषीणामथ यत्पितृभ्यो निवृणाति यत्प्रजामिच्छति तेन पितॄणामथ यन्मनुष्यान्वासयते यदेभ्यो ऽशनं ददाति तेन मनुष्याणामथ यत्पशुभ्येस्तृणोदिकं विन्दति तेन पशूनां यदस्य गृहेषु श्वापदा वयास्यापिपीलिकाश्च उपजीवन्ति तेन तेषां लोकः ।

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।

आत्मन्येव च संतुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥ १७ ॥

But the man who finds bliss in the Self, who is satisfied with the Self, and rejoices in the Self for him there is not the obligatoriness of action.

### NOTES

1 Till now the Lord described in an episodic way the obligatoriness of action and the sinfulness of inaction. But in the case of those who have risen through action to realisation, the law of the obligatoriness of action ceases to be applicable



2. Only the souls who have risen to the heights of meditation communion and realisation can attain to this height. The Lord ever and anon even in this discourse about Karma presents to the mind of the disciple the vision of the perfect ideal.

3 मानव — is used to indicate the man of thought and realisation and may include Gods also.

1 रति नृप्ति व क्षय—refer to three kinds of mental states. रति is in relation to garlands woman etc. नृप्ति is in relation to food and drink. क्षय is in relation to acquisitions like cows wealth children etc.

5 The Sṛuti declares आत्ममीदं आत्मरतिं क्रिया पानप मग्नादिदा परिहृ । It is said also आत्मरतिरात्ममीदं आत्ममिथुन आत्मानन्द । आत्मसाभाष परं विद्यत । एतदयामृतं शृणु तृप्यात ।

6 It is well stated in the following verse that he who has realised the fulness of bliss in God cares not for the minor pleasures पश्याप्तकामस्य कृत्वात्मनस्तु हृदयं सर्वे प्रविलीयन्ति कामाः ।

7 Sri Sankaracharya says in his Sutra Bhashya (I 1 1) अक्षरारा व्यस्माकं यद्वाच्यं । तौ सखा सयकं सम्पदादिति कृतकृत्यता च ।

नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतनेह कश्चन ।

न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थम्यपाधयः ॥ १८ ॥

To him there is no selfish purpose to be attained through action Nor does he suffer any deprivation by desisting from action To him there is no dependence for any selfish purpose upon the whole realm of created being

### NOTES

1. This verse, like the preceding one, describes the man of God-vision and God-realisation who has attained his exquisite bliss of Bhakti and jnana as the fulfilment and fruit of his life of Karma yoga and who is so lost in the rapture of realisation that the duties and joys of the lower realm of action have been included and transcended in a higher bliss just as the lamplight is lost and transcended in the full bright golden radiance of the noonday sun.

2 Sri Madhuscodana describes here the seven *yoga bhoomis* which form the stages in the life of him who has become so pure in heart and steadfast in mind as to be fit to vision and realise and attain God The seven stages are stated thus in *Yoga Vasishtha*

ज्ञानभूमि शुभेच्छाख्या प्रथमा परिकीर्तिता ।

विचारणा द्वितीया स्यात्तृतीया तनुमानसा ॥

सत्त्वापत्तिश्चतुर्थी स्यात्ततोऽससक्तिनामिका ।

पदार्थाभावनी षष्ठी सप्तमी तुर्यगा स्मृता ॥

Vasishtha says further that these 7 stages correspond to the jagrat svapna and sushupti stages in point of intensity of perception and bliss

भूमिश्चाप्रितय त्वतशम आपदिति स्थितम् ।  
यथावद्वेदबुद्धिर्दं तगव्याप्रति दश्यते ॥  
भद्रैत स्थयेनायाते द्वैत प्रथममागत ।  
पश्यन्ति स्वप्नब्रह्मोके वतुर्षा भूमिश्चाप्रिता ॥  
पञ्चमी भूमिश्चाप्रितय गुणुत्तिरदनामिश्चाम् ।  
पठ्ठी तादृगुत्तिरदनामिश्चाम् ॥  
पञ्चमी भूमिश्चाप्रितय स्थित्या सप्तमी भूमिश्चाप्रितय ।  
किञ्चिदेष तपसस्त्वपनेव न किञ्चन ॥  
विदेहमुत्तमा तूष्ठा मुत्तमा योगभूमिश्चा ।  
अगम्या वचसा शान्ता सा सीमा योगभूमिषु ॥

3 Sri Bhagavata thus describes the seer full of God vision and God realisation as one who is in the state of such ecstacy of bliss that the comings and goings of fleeting pleasures and pains have no effect on him

देह च नश्वरमवस्थितमुत्थितं वा  
सिद्धा न पश्यति यतोऽप्यगमास्त्वम्याम् ।  
देवादुपेतमथ देवघादपेत  
बाहो यथा परिकृत मदिरामदायः ॥

The Gita declares

तद्यथाऽहिनिर्व्वयनी चल्मीके मृता प्रत्यस्ता शयीतैवमेवेदं शरीरं  
शोतेऽथायमशरीरो मृत प्राणो ब्रह्मैव तेज एव ।

4 As among the seven planes of yogic realisation above-said it is said that the first three are the means, that the fourth is the state of wisdom, and that the last three are the stages of jivanmukti

चतुर्थी भूमिका ज्ञान तिष्ठ स्युः साधन पुरा ।

जीवन्मुक्तेरवस्थास्तु परास्तिष्ठ प्रकीर्तिता ॥

5 Sri Madhwa quotes the following beautiful line विष्णावेव रतिर्यस्य किंवा तस्यैव नास्ति हि ।

6 It is well said

ज्ञानामृतेन तृप्तस्य कृतकृत्यस्य योगिनः ।

नैवास्ति किञ्चित्कर्तव्यमस्ति चेन्न स तत्त्ववित् ॥

तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।

असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः ॥ १९ ॥

Therefore, do thou always perform without attachment the obligatory duties, for by performing action without attachment, man verily reaches the Supreme

### NOTES

1 तस्मात् Neelakantha says this means because unattached work is not a cause of bondage यस्मान्निष्कामस्य कर्मलेपो नास्ति

2 Only *Muktas* and *Jivanmuktas* are so lost in the ecstatic visioning of God that action has fallen off from them. Others and even men of wisdom in moods of *मृत्युञ्ज* (awareness of the world) must do their duties in life. Sri Madhwacharya says well यतोऽसप्रज्ञातसमापश्य कथाभाव तस्मात्कर्म समाचर ।

3 Sri Ramanujacharya interprets पर as meaning the *jivatma*. This means that the person pursuing the path of *Nishkama Karma* will realise the true nature of the soul and that then through *Bhakti* the bliss of God realisation will result.

कर्मणैव हि ससिद्धिमाप्सिता जननादय ।  
लोकसम्प्रहमेवापि नयस्यन्कर्तुमर्हसि ॥ २० ॥

Janaka and others have indeed attained perfection through action alone, and even from the point of view of the welfare of the world by not swerving from the path of righteousness, thou shouldst perform action.

### NOTES

1 The various stories about Janaka's life show how he was an ideal *Karmayogi*.

2 The combination of work and unselfishness is difficult and the elimination of selfish motive

from work has to be slowly attained by strenuous effort and God's grace

3 Such unselfish work removes the low pleasure of selfish enjoyment during success and the keen sting of disappointment during failure, helps the progress of country and humanity, and leads us to that state of inner purity and peace which lead to the bliss of God-love and God-realisation

4. लोकसंग्रह- लोकस्योन्मार्गप्रवृत्तिनिवारणम् । (the preventing of Adharmic action by the world)

5. Janaka is specially mentioned because a King can best guide his people in the paths of righteousness by being righteous himself सर्वे राजा-  
श्रिता धर्मो राजा धर्मस्य धारकः ।

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।

स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥ २१ ॥

Whatsoever a superior man does, that other men also do. Whatsoever he acts on as authoritative, that is followed by the world at large.

### NOTES

1. The heroisms of self-control and obedience to the Lord's commandments are necessary not only to the individual but also for the solidarity of society.

2. Sri Ramanuja well says अथवा सोऽनाह्न  
 ज्ञितं वा हानवानादप्येवमप्यावयत् (The sin of misleading  
 and ruining others will overthrow him from his  
 Jnanayoga if his conduct is not all right and he  
 does not take care about it in his fancied superiority  
 as a J (naya yati)

न मे पाथास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।  
 नानपाप्तमपाप्तस्य वर्तते एष उक्तमणि ॥ २२ ॥

In all the three worlds (O Partha, there is  
 not for me any obligatory action that must be  
 done nor is there anything unattained that has  
 to be attained. Yet I remain in action.

### NOTES

1 The Lord besides giving a large number  
 of convincing reasons finally instances himself as  
 the supreme example of a Karma Yogi.

2 The Lord's work is His Leela. It is due to  
 the abundance of His Grace and for the betterment  
 of humanity (सर्वसमृद्धि)

3 The Lord is not a *Buddha* or *mukta* (soul  
 in bondage or liberated soul). He is the Paramatma  
 who is अपाप्तममलक्ष्यम्, गत्यक्ष्यम्, गत्यसङ्ख्यम्, Omnipotence  
 Omniscience and Omnipresence and when yet out

of His Grace (अनुग्रह) comes into the world of men to uphold righteousness and draw the eyes and hearts of all to His lotus feet by His Beauty and His Love

यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।  
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥ २३ ॥

If I do not continue in action incessantly and without indolence, men would in all respects and directions follow in that path of mine, O Partha.

उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्यां कर्म चेदहम् ।  
संकरस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः ॥

If I do not engage in action, these worlds would perish I should be the cause of confusion of births, and I should thus ruin all these created beings.

#### NOTES.

1. Duty (Dharma) is what keeps the worlds in tune and leads souls to God Hence Iswara as the Lord of Duty is ever declaring it by words and conduct धर्मो विश्वस्य जगत प्रतिष्ठा. Wordsworth says of Duty



Then dost preserve the stars from wrong  
And the most ancient heavens through thee  
are fresh and strong

2 The breach of duty leads to Dharma sankara and Varna sankara and destroys the orderly upward evolution of life. I have referred to this already in Chapter I and shall refer to it again in Chapter IV.

सत्का कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुवन्ति भारत ।  
 कुर्याद्विद्वांस्तथासवाधिकां पुल्लोकसंप्रदम् ॥ २५ ॥

Just as the unenlightened do work O Bharata, in a spirit of attachment to action, so should the enlightened man do work without attachment and with a desire for the proper guidance and welfare of the world

## NOTES

1 The difference is one of motive. The heart is the seat of worldliness or Godliness according as we train it and purify it. Blessed are the pure in spirit, for they shall see God

न युद्धिमेव जनयेवञ्चाना कर्मसङ्गिनाम् ।  
 ओपयत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान्युक्त समाचरन् ॥ ६६ ॥

Let no learned man cause an unsettlement

of mind among those who have not become full of wisdom and who are yet attached to work. He should cause all actions to be done, himself doing them in the proper spirit of *yoga*.

### NOTES

1 The Lord says that the truly wise man should induce all to do their duties, slowly introducing the element of the higher motive which transforms the lead of work into the gold of love and bliss, by himself doing duty in the proper spirit of unattached work for pleasing the Lord

2 It has been said

अज्ञस्यार्धब्रह्मस्य सर्वं ब्रह्मेति यो वदेत् ।  
महानिरयजालेषु स तेन विनियोजित ॥

3 Religious propagandism, overthrowing of beliefs, and unsettlement of minds are not God's work. The truly divine work is effecting a conversion of the heart, leaving the duties unaltered

प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः ।  
अहंकारविमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते ॥ २७ ॥

He whose mind is clouded by egoism regards himself as the doer in respect of all actions which are done by the qualities of Prakriti

## NOTES

1 The Prakṛiti spoken of here is not the self active and independent Prakṛiti of the Sāṅkhya but the Pārameśwari śakti which gives suitable embodiments to jivas as the result of actions and binds them or frees them in accordance with violation of or obedience to, the Lord's commandments. Such śakti is thus described in our sacred books

इवामशास्त्रं स्य गुणनिगूढम् ।

मायां तु प्रसूतिं त्रिषात्म्यायिनं तु महेश्वरम् ॥

तस्यपिचु मदायाहो गुणकमविभागयो ।

गुणा गुणवु धतन्ते इति मरया न सञ्जते ॥ २८ ॥

O mighty-armed he who know the truth about the diversities of qualities and actions, realising that the senses which are natural qualities move amidst the objects which are also natural qualities is not attached

## NOTES

1 Such a clear discernor knows that the soul is not the principle of association with things but it is the mind which is in a state of relation to objects.

2 Hence the soul is free and realised as free from all the infinite complexities of causes and

effects in nature Then Ahamkara (egoism) and Mamakara, the acquisitive and possessive sense cease to hold sway over us

3 In a beautiful and telling passage the Scripture shows how the soul identifies itself with the mind and the senses and the object

अन्धो मणिमविन्दत् । तमनङ्गुलिरावयत् । अग्नीवः प्रत्यमुञ्चत् ।  
तमजिह्वो असञ्चत् ।

4 Buddhi, ahamkara, the senses, and the objects are all गुणविभागाः The कर्मविभागाः depend on them

5 Sri Madhusoodana takes गुणकर्मविभागयोः as गुणकर्म on the one hand and विभाग which means Atman on the other. The author of Bhashyotkarsha Deepika criticises this view. Indeed he seldom omits an opportunity of attacking Madhusoodana

6 This stanza shows that in this universe of matter and energy, the needs of the organism which are the effects of *gunas* and the cause of *karmas* are not connected with the soul which is *sachidananda*. The predominance of a particular *guna* determines our mental outlook and our consequent actions Hence man ought to take care of the work as well as the motive

प्रकृतेर्गुणसमूहाः सज्जन्ते गुणकर्मसु ।

तानकृत्स्नयिदो मन्वान्कृत्स्नयिञ्च विचाळयेत् ॥२९॥

Those who are deluded by the qualities of Prakṛiti are attached to the actions done by the guṇas. The man of perfect knowledge should not unsettle those men of imperfect knowledge and dull comprehension.

### NOTES

1. He should not, as already pointed out in my notes to verse 26 take away their attachment to work but should introduce slowly the transforming element of Nishkāmakarma that will lead through devotion and wisdom to liberation.

2. कृत्स्न means "The All i.e., God. This is well brought out by the following verses:

सदेवेष्वादिवाक्येभ्यः कृत्स्नं वस्तु यतोऽद्वयम् ।

समवयवद्विरुद्धस्य कुतोऽकृत्स्नस्य वस्तुतः ॥

यस्मिन्ध्येऽप्यख्योऽयं स तदन्यत्र शिष्यते ।

तथा ह्येऽपि ब्रह्मः स्यादकृत्स्नस्तादृश्यते ॥

The Bratī also says:

आत्मनो वा अरे दर्शनेन धर्मेण यस्या विज्ञानेनेदं सर्वं विदितम् ।

यस्मिन्विज्ञाते सर्वमिदं विज्ञातं भवति ।

3. Sri Ramanujacharya expounds the truth contained in this verse in his own masterly way

ते किल मन्दाः श्रेष्ठजनाचारानुवर्तिनः कर्मयोगादुत्थितमेन हृष्टा  
कर्मयोगात् प्रचलितमनसो भवेयुः । अतः श्रेष्ठः स्वयमपि कर्मयोगे  
तिष्ठन्नात्मयाथात्म्यज्ञानेन आत्मनोऽकर्तृत्वमनुसंधानः कर्मयोग एवा-  
त्मावलोकने निरपेक्षसाधनमिति दर्शयित्वा तानकृत-विदो जोषयेत् ॥

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।

निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः ॥ ३० ॥

Do thy work of fighting, surrendering unto me all actions, with thy mind realising that thou art the servant of God, free from attachment to results and from a desire of selfish possession, and free from burning grief and anxiety.

#### NOTES :

1 The realisation that God has His purposes achieved through us is one of the great liberators from sin and bondage. We are His servants and we must do our duty as His servants. He is the *Antaryamin* अन्तःप्रविष्टः शास्त्रा जनानां सर्वात्मा. See also Gita XVIII, 61. Our illusion of our being कर्ता will be overcome by this means. This is consistent with the further realisation that the real agents in work are the mind, the senses, and the body, the soul being साक्षी (witness) and Sacchidananda. A fur-

the realisation is the realisation of its identity with Paramatma. Much confusion of thought arises when we utter all these realisations without realising their interconnection and gradation. The immediate agents in work are Prakriti Gunas and the ultimate agent is God who is the lord of Prakriti. So long as we are under the illusion of the soul being the doer and enjoyer and do not realise that the soul is *sakshi* and *svachidananta* we are bound to the wheel of *samsara*. The realisations above-said free us from such illusion. The Lord is in no way affected by our actions because He is like rain bringing each seed unto fruition and fulfilment according to its true and essential nature.

2. Only when we realise these truths, we will be inclined to surrender the fruits of actions to God and pray that He may scatter the blessed results of the actions broadcast over the world for the joy of mankind. The torture of the selfish prayer of individual happiness will leave us only then. The mere intellectual assent to the doctrine that the Prakriti gunas are the real agents in work is of no use. Our illusion is too strong to be destroyed by a mere intellectual assent. The doing of duties irrespective of consequences and by way of carrying out His commandments to win His grace

slowly generates our intense realisation of our true nature. The conquest of illusion is only by such means and by none other. To such a soul full of *sraddha* and striving God gives the bliss of realisation. If you rely on God and realise that He is the real agent in human actions His grace will give the fullness of *jnana*. The importance of such faith is taught in the following verses

ये मे मतमिदं नित्यमनुतिष्ठन्ति मानवः ।  
भक्ताधन्तोऽनुसूयन्तो मुच्यन्ते तेऽपि कर्मभिः ॥

Those men who follow this teaching of mine ceaselessly, full of faith and free from cavil, they also are freed from the bondage of actions.

### NOTES

1. Three grades of Godwardness are indicated here. Follow His teachings, at least have faith, in any event do not cavil. These persons though below the *jnanayogi* are all wending Godward.

2. Such is the importance of *sraddha* or faith. The Lord emphasises this in Chapter IV verses 39- 40

3. The Agneya Purana says



श्रुतिमात्ररसा सूक्ष्मा प्रथानपुण्येश्वरा ।

अद्यामानम गृह्यन्ते न करेण न चक्षुषा ॥

अद्या धर्मः परः सूक्ष्म अद्या ज्ञान हुतं तपः ।

अद्या स्वर्गस्य मोक्षस्य अद्या अनामद जगत् ॥

4. What is *śraddhā* ? शास्त्राचार्योपदिष्टस्यैकानुभूतेऽप्येव मेवैतदिति विश्वासः [Madhusoodana] It is faith that what is taught by scripture and teacher is true

5 Quite opposed to it is *Asuya* (असूया). It is गुणेषु दोषाविष्करणं (saying that good qualities are really defects trying to prove that what acts are pronounced to be auspicious are causes of our undoing denying the truth of virtues, etc.) Hiraṇya-kasipu was the worst of cavillers and sceptics and atheists. So was Siṃhupala. Such souls cannot rise to the Supreme

6 Faith is not opposed to reason. Reason belongs to the world of the senses. Faith is the instrument of realisation and the organ of truth in the super-sensuous world. That the mind and the senses are the real agents is clear to us from reason (*Samkhya*). That God is the ultimate agent is the declaration of faith. That God and soul are one in bliss is the realisation.

7 *Isuya* is also described as परेत्यर्थासहिष्णुत्व (inability to put up with the superiority of another)

If one will not accept the glory and power of God but cavils at him and disobeys His laws, there is no hope for him

8 The faith that leads to hatred of other religions or men is not faith ; it is *ahamkara*. Pure faith increases our love of God and man and always takes us nearer to God-realisation

ये त्वेतद्भ्यसूयन्तो नानुतिष्ठन्ति मे मतम् ।  
सर्वज्ञानविमूढास्तान्विद्धि नष्टानचेतसः ॥ ३२ ॥

But those who, being given to carping and decrying, do not follow this teaching of mine know them to be men of diverse ignorance in respect of all forms of wisdom, lost men, and men of lost mind

### NOTES

1 This terrible indictment is quite legitimate, because if after such revelation from such divine lips we are full of doubt or despair or dislike we are indeed lost souls

2 The moods of agnosticism and athiesm bar the door to self-realisation and God-realisation.

3 Reason is the revealer, and faith the m-  
neller The army of low impulses and desires has

to be overthrown by the sword of faith and not by the lamp of reason

1. Neelakantha says that एव means God Chapter VI of the Gita says एवै समानोऽपि तदाऽपि एव । Madhusoodana says that अचतस्रः relates to the sum total of knowledge relating to Karma and Brahma and Saguna and Nirguna He points out also the process of decline or अचतस्रं घनज्ञानविभूतान् and नष्टान् (१४, with unilluminated minds deluded as to all truth and lost) The Lord states later on in the Gita

तानर्हं द्विषताः क्रूरान्सर्वारेषु नराधमान् ।  
 धिपाग्दधमधुमान्यासुराण्यथ यानिषु ॥  
 आशूरी यानिमायमा मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि ।  
 अमाप्य मां निषतन्त भूत्युपचारमनि ॥

5. Sankarananda says that the Lord condemns those who give up action and are unfit for renunciation कम बहुसाधनसाध्यं क्लेशभूयिष्ठं मरश्चक्षुः पातस्तत्सन्ध्यास एव परममुग्रमिषयः विपरीतजुग्यस्तान् घन्यासान्नदानकमनिष्ठान् जनाग्रष्टान् विनश्युष्यमोक्षान्विद्धि ॥

सह्य चेतने स्वस्या प्रहसेर्चनयानपि ।  
 प्रकृतिं याति भूतानि निमग्न किं करिष्यति ॥३३॥

Even the man of knowledge acts in accor-

dance with his own nature All beings follow nature. What can restraint avail ?

### NOTES

1. This is in answer to Arjuna's assumed question as to why if following the Lord's teaching confers such blessings all persons do not follow it

2 प्रकृतिः is that portion of the sum-total of our good and evil acts and tendencies which attain fruition and expression in this life Sri Sankaracharya says पूर्वकृतधर्माविर्मादिमत्कारो वर्तमानतन्माभिव्यक्त या प्रकृतिः Sri Ramanujacharya says that प्रकृति means प्राचीनवासना Sri Madhvacarya says that it means पूर्वसंस्कारः ।

enough purity and power to counteract the currents of desire fed from a 'dusht' springs in previous births.

3 The theory of innate good or evil nature is propounded by Sri Mathacharya but is rejected by the other schools of thought. I think that a calm study of our scriptures will show that it is baseless. The soul is pure consciousness and bliss. The Karmic and physical inheritance is what is called nature and we have to free ourselves from our burdens by karma bhakti and jnana. Karma is not opposed to God's omnipotence. God is law as well as Love.

न भ्रूत्स्वर्माद्यस्य दौष्ये तावता यत ।

भवद्व्य भावितायेनामाभरत्तैव निर्दिता ॥

इन्द्रियस्येन्द्रियस्वाये रागद्वेषौ व्यपसितौ ।

तयोऽन यशमागच्छेत्तौ ह्यस्य परिपश्यन्तौ ॥ ३४ ॥

For each sense there abide in its object attachment and aversion. We must not come under their sway. They are our real enemies in the (Godward) path.

### NOTES

1 The Lord then shows how the nature of each man consisting of his tendencies can be over-

come and perfected Else if the nature of each man bears him irresistibly along its currents, what is the use of scriptures at all ? Our tendencies generate a feeling of attachment *e g* to forbidden food and a feeling of aversion *e g* to enjoined duties The scripture teaches us the evil of harmful but liked things Will any one eat food which he knows to be poisoned however hungry he may be ? Will any one turn away from a disliked medicine if he knows that it will save his life ?

2 Hence the initial desires due to pre-acquired tendencies none can control But man's freedom and choice lie in his power of restraining action and curbing desire through the help of study, good company, and divine grace Madhusoodana says well  
तत्र पुरुषाकारस्य शास्त्रस्य चायं विषयो यत्तयोर्वशं नागच्छेदिति ।

3 Nowhere in the world is such a convincing solution of the problems of free-will and predestination given as in this verse Madhusoodana says तत्तत्त्वाप्रतिबद्धं शास्त्रं विहिते पुरुषं प्रवर्तयति निषिद्धाच्च निवर्तयतीति शास्त्रीयविवेकविज्ञानप्राबल्येन स्वाभाविकरागद्वेषयोः कारणोपमर्देनोपमर्दान्न प्रकृतिर्विपरीतमार्गे पुरुषः शास्त्रदृष्टिं प्रवर्तयितुं शक्नोतीति न शास्त्रस्य पुरुषाकारस्य च वैयर्थ्यप्रसंगः ।

4 Venkatanatha well points out that प्रकृति becomes a factor in action only through रागद्वेष,



7 Sri Ramanuja points out that this verse means that राग and द्वेष cannot be conquered by merely taking up Jnanayoga and that the path of Karmayoga is far better

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुण परधर्मोस्वनुष्ठितात् ।  
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥ ३५ ॥

Far more auspicious is one's own duty though not of meritorious character than another's duty well performed. Better is death in the discharge of one's duty than life in the discharge of another's duty. The duty of another is fraught with fearful consequences.

### NOTES

1. The previous verse having taught the elimination of passion, how can there be any dislike of our duty? So the Lord insists on each doing his duty.

2. Men's duties are determined by their qualitative potentialities which become operative at birth. But social arrangements and individual upbringing may help or hinder the discharge of such duties. Higher spirituality depends however on the proper discharge of such duties in the proper spirit. The equipment of fitness and the equipment of motive are both indispensable.



3 The disobedience to this rule has not only personal but also a social consequences. As a matter of fact all action has in one sense the stamp of Prakṛiti on it. It is not of the soul. There is no question of higher or lower in the realm of duties. All are equally related to the centre of God as the radii are equally related to the centre in a circle. If our duty is properly done and in the right spirit it results in the highest self-realisation of the soul.

4 Sri Ramanuja expounds all these verses as showing that Karma yoga is better than *vyasa* or Jñāna yoga. The other commentators take them as showing how karma yoga is to be effectively performed by the conquest and elimination of desire. A man who merely acts is a *karmi* but he who acts in the manner taught by the Lord is a *karma yogi*.

मर्तुन उवाच—

अथ कन प्रयुक्ताऽय पापं चरति ॥६५॥

अनिच्छन्नपि पाप्मोऽयं सलाक्षियं निपादितः ॥ ३६ ॥

Arjuna said—

But by whom is a man impelled to commit sin, O Varshneya as if he, though not desiring sin is constrained by compulsion to do so?

## NOTES

1. Arjuna puts this question to get a definite answer. Who is the impeller to action? God, or Dharma and Adharma, or Raga and Dvesha? Is the soul helpless? Is it the mere theatre of a play or a mere playground for us? Can it overcome all opposition and attain to the highest? Are all the causes of equal potency? Who is the real foe of the Jiva? How can he be vanquished? Arjuna wants to know all this so that he may follow the Lord's commandments and win His grace

2 Man is not an automaton He is a moral agent His previous Karmas and vasanas determine his birth and outlook He should not give up his duty and take up other duties He should and could do his duties in a Nishkama (desireless) spirit That is his privilege as well as his obligation If Arjuna took up sanyasa, that would be fruitless *Nigraha* or self-compulsion But if he fought in a *Nishkama* spirit he will be following the bent of his nature and will at the same time win the Lord's grace Duty is pre-ordained, but purity or impurity, virtue or sin, is of our making In this respect we are free and responsible agents; Our Karmas determine our jati, life, and enjoyment, Our Vasanas give us the initial tendencies to choice

but we can and should overcome desire and sin and if we do not we must suffer. Here is the only true reconciliation of determinism and freedom.

3. Arjuna wants to know who is the most active and dreaded foe of man and the Lord tells him about this

4. Sri Ramanuja says that Arjuna asks why the jnana yogin is impelled into a life of enjoyment. According to him all these verses are intended to show the superiority of karma yoga over jnana yoga

श्रीभगवानुवाच—

काम एव क्रोध एव रजोगुणसमुद्भवा ।

महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥ ३७ ॥

The Blessed Lord said

He is desire; he is anger, he is born of Rajo guna; he is all consuming and all sinful know him to be the enemy in this world

### NOTES

1. Sri Sankaracharya explains in this verse what Bhagavan means. It means the perfection of supremacy, virtue, fame, auspiciousness, dispassion and freedom



5 In the case of an enemy there are four methods of dealing with him दान, दान, भेद दण्ड (peace gift, diplomacy and war) In the case of this enemy the first three methods are useless. The more you give, the more he takes. The more friendly you are the more domineering he becomes. Nor can diplomacy avail. Kind treatment is suicidal.

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien  
As to be hated needs but to be seen.  
But seen too oft, familiar with her face,  
We first endure, then pity then embrace —(I ops)

Hence दण्ड is the only proper method in the case of *Lama*

6 Sri Sankaracharya points out that only kama is transformed into krodha (anger) when desire is obstructed in its progress towards enjoyment. It is stated क्लृप्ते कामे न कोपाया जायन्ते हि कथञ्चन ।

7 Verses 62 and 63 in Chapter II show how the succession of soul-deluding states arise

8. In Santi-parva Mahabharata kama is compared to a tree of which all other passions are parts and the soul is tied to it by iron chains.

हृदि कामममित्रा माहसन्धयमव ।

कोषमानमहास्कन्धो विधित्वापरिवेचन ॥

तस्य चाज्ञानमाधारः प्रमादं परिवेचनम् ।  
 सोऽभ्यसूयापलाशो हि पुरादुष्कृतसारवान् ॥  
 संमोहचिन्ताविटपः शोकशाखो भयाङ्कुरः ।  
 मोहिनीभिः पिपासाभिर्लताभिरनुवेष्टितः ॥  
 उपासते महावृक्षं सुलुब्धास्तत्फलेप्सवः ।  
 आयसैः सयताः पाशैः फलदं परिवेष्टयन्तम् ॥

9 Such is the power of Kama It is said

अकामस्य क्रिया काचिदृश्यते नेह कर्हिचित् ।  
 यद्यद्वि कुर्वते जन्तुस्तत्तत्कामस्य चेष्टितम् ॥

धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्यथादर्शो मलेन च ।  
 यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥ ३८ ॥

As fire is enveloped by smoke, as a mirror by dust, as an embryo by the womb, even so is this (self-consciousness of the soul) enveloped by it (Kama or desire.)

### NOTES

1 The three illustrations represent different degrees of density of envelopment. Also, as Sri Desikar points out, the first illustration shows that desire is co-existent as smoke with fire, constantly reverts as dust to the mirror, and envelops us so fully as the womb envelops the foetus, that for release expert aid is necessary. Sri Madhu-

Soodana explains another aspect. In the first stage desire is not so forceful just as smoke surrounds the fire but does not lessen its power to burn. In the second stage it is more powerful and dims the soul as dust dims the mirror and deprives it of its reflecting power. But the mirror is visible. In the third stage it is very powerful and grips and hides the soul as the focus is hidden and imprisoned. Sankarananda says that the Lord emphasises the difference between desire and wisdom. The former is dark opaque and inanimate the latter is bright transparent and animate. The former colours the soul dark as smoke colours the fire dark it destroys the transparency and reflecting power of the soul as dust destroys the same of the mirror and it makes the soul lifeless as the amnion renders the embryo a helpless prisoner. Dhanapati says that the three illustrations show that desire prevents knowledge from revealing the Atman it next prevents the seeing of things as they are and it finally destroys discrimination. Sri Madhwa says that the illustrations represent the action of desire on three classes of souls. He quotes from *Brahma Tarka*:

तत्र काम काञ्चनमिः सर्वे धूममत्तात्मनः ।  
 धूमवप्याधमजन क्रमादात्म तिर्यति च

माधृतं ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा ।

नामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूरेणानलेन च ॥ ३९ ॥

Knowledge is enveloped by this desire, which is the incessantly active foe of the wise. Such desire is hard to fulfil and is insatiable.

### NOTES

1 Sri Sankaracharya says that desire is the incessantly active foe of the wise man, for only the latter sees the operations of the enemy. The fool is under the domination of desire and knows nothing about the foe. In the case of this meaning नित्यवैरिणा goes with ज्ञानिनः ।

2 Or ज्ञानिनो may go with ज्ञान and desire may be viewed as the enemy of all. But the former is clearly the better meaning.

3 The word अनल is used to mean insatiable or a flame. नाभितृप्यति काष्ठाना ।

इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिरस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते ।

एतैर्विमोहयत्येष ज्ञानमावृत्य देहिनम् ॥ ४० ॥

The senses, the mind, and the will are said to be his seats; by means of these he deludes the jiva (soul) by veiling his wisdom.



## NOTES

1. Buddhi is the will the region of concepts and determinations. Mind is the lower region of motor impulses and sensory impressions. The senses are the channels of knowledge. Kama goes through the outer gates and finally captures the fort and then the citadel. Hence watch the gates. Each sensation of pleasure will not be an enemy but for the co-ordinating mind and will that remember and associate pleasures with objects under the sway of desire

2. In connection with this we must remember the beautiful simile in the Kathopanishad about the soul being the owner of a chariot (or the body) the will being the charoteer the mind being the reins, and the senses being the horses. In the Bhagavata (skandha IV Chapter 25) the Paranjy nopakhyanam brings out the inter relations of the soul and the senses in a telling way

3. The Lord tells us the stronghold of the enemy so that we may kill him. Else he will trouble us again and again. Sri Madhvaacharya says well वषार्थे शत्रोराधिष्ठानमाह । इताधिष्ठानो हि शत्रुर्नश्यति ।

तस्मात्स्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य मरत्यम् ।

पाप्मानं प्रजहति क्षेत्रज्ञानधिज्ञाननाशनम् ॥ ४१ ॥

Therefore, O chief of Bharatas, controlling first the senses, kill him (desire) who is sin and who is the destroyer of knowledge and realisation

### NOTES

1 ज्ञान is book-learning विशान is realisation

2 The purification of mind and will has to follow the control of the senses Only then it will succeed.

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः ।

मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः ॥ ४२ ॥

The senses are said to be higher than (the body), the mind is higher than the senses, the determinative faculty is higher than the mind; and He is higher than the determinative faculty.

### NOTES

1. *Manas* is the mind in which the alternations of doubt and determination exist. *Buddhi* is the mind in the state of determinateness

2 The above translation brings out what is the aid of the higher power to conquer and control the lower power From each lower plane which is

under the control of *kāma* or desire he has to be dislodged with the help of the higher power

3 That this is the meaning is clear from the corresponding verses in the *Kathopanishad*

इन्द्रियेभ्यः परा कर्षा भवेन्मय पर मन ।

मनसस्तु परा पुद्गिर्बुद्धेर्धरा महान्वरा ॥

महत् परमम्यक्तमन्यक्तस्य रूपः परः ।

पुरुषास्तु न पर किञ्चित्सा काष्ठा सा परा गति ॥

4. The region of steadfastness and clarity of ideas is *Buddhi*. It is from there that the light of intellection comes. It is itself illumined and vitalised by the *Atman*. The realised self identity of the soul is the background which renders memory and coherence of mental life possible. The will is the channel of the ultimate illumination and energy which brighten and sustain everything

5 *Sri Ramanuja* says that *च* is desire. According to him the verse means that we have various enemies—the senses the mind reason and desire—the last being the arch-enemy. But this interpretation is against the spirit of the *Katha Upanishad* mantras above stated. Further though the impure mind is our enemy the pure mind is our friend and helper

6 Sri Madhwa says that what is denoted in this verse are the divinities presiding over the senses, the mind, etc

## NOTES

1 The Lord shows that only through God's grace can be overthrown the basisnescience (मूलभ्रम) which is the real origin of desire

2 The arch enemy if he is merely beaten may return and give trouble. So the Lord tells us what are his strongholds what are his real sources of power what are our aids in overthrowing him and how he is to be destroyed

3 As the Kathopanishad says

यदा सर्वे प्रभियन्त इदम्येह प्र पय ।

अथ मर्त्योऽमृतो भवत्यन मस्य समस्तुत ॥

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

1 Sri Madhusoodana sums up the teaching of this Chapter thus:—

उपाय कर्मनिष्ठायाऽपान्योनोपसृता ।

उपेयादाननिष्ठा तु सद्गुणत्वेन कीर्तिता ॥

The Karmayoga which is the means of self-realisation is the chief topic of the chapter. The blessedness of wisdom which is the goal is also hinted at in it

2. Sri Yamunacharya thus sums up the chapter



senses. He must dedicate to the Supreme his actions and the fruits thereof. Then only will he attain peace and perfection. The chief enemy in his path is *Hamz* or *desire*. His favourite seats are the senses the mind and the intellect. Dislodge him from these by the control of the senses perfected by the control of the mind. Seek the aid of God for this end and slay the arch-enemy of the soul and live in eternal bliss. Such are the teachings of the third Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita.

Thus ends the Chapter KARMA YOGA

## CHAPTER IV

### Karma Brahmarpana Yoga.

श्रीभगवानुवाच--

इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम् ।

विवस्वान्मनवे प्राह मरुतिश्वाकवेऽब्रवीत् ॥ १ ॥

The blessed Bhagavan said :

I told this Eternal Yoga to the Sun-God; He taught it to Manu , and Manu taught it to Ikshvaku.

#### NOTES

1 The topics dealt with in this chapter are thus described in Sri Yamunacharya's Gitārtha Sangraha

प्रसङ्गात्स्वभावोक्तिः कर्मणोऽकर्मतास्य च ।

भेदा ज्ञानस्य माहात्म्यं चतुर्थेऽध्याय उच्यते ॥

2. Sri Sankaracharya says that the Lord has summed up His gracious doctrine and now gives up its blessed geneology to show that it is वेदार्थं (the essence of the Veda) योऽयं योगोऽध्यायद्वयेनोक्तो ज्ञान-निष्ठालक्षणः ससंन्यास कर्मयोगोपायः यस्मिन् वेदार्थः परिसमाप्तः प्रवृत्तिलक्षणो निवृत्तिलक्षणश्च, गीतासु च सर्वास्वयमेव योगो विवक्षितो भगवता । अतः परिसमाप्तं वेदार्थं मन्वानस्त वंशकथनेन स्तौति श्रीभगवान् ।



3 The topics described in the verse above quoted are further clearly detailed in Sri Ramanuja charya's introduction thus

तृतीयेऽध्याय प्रकृतिष्वगुष्टस्य मुमुक्षोः पदेषा ज्ञानयोगान्नविकारात् कर्मयोग एव ध्येयः ज्ञानयोगाधिकारेणाऽप्यर्जुनानुसंधानपूर्वककर्मयोग एव भवामिति पदेणुकमुक्तम् विधिप्रतया व्यपदेशस्य तु विरोधत कर्मयोग एव काय दत्त चाश्रयम् । अनुयेंदानीमस्यैव कर्मयोगस्य निमित्तजगदुद्धारणाय स अन्तरादवापदिष्टतया कर्तव्यता रक्षयित्वा अन्तर्गतज्ञानतयाऽस्यैव ज्ञानयोगाकारतां प्रदत्त कर्मयोगोऽस्त्वस्य तन्मयाः कर्मयोगो ज्ञानोद्यस्यैव प्राधान्यं चाश्रयत । प्रसङ्गाच्च भगवद्वतारयायात्म्यमुच्यत ॥

1 Sri Madhvacharya says with a brevity that is quite consistent with thoroughness

पुरु परस्य माहात्म्य कर्मभदा ज्ञानमाहात्म्य चाच्यतेऽस्मिन्प्याये ।

5 Narayana is thus not merely the causeless first cause of the Universe but also its आदिगुरु (first teacher) The familiar stanzas ' यो मद्भाषन् विदधाति पृथम् " and " नारायण पश्यन्तु वसिष्ठम् " show this.

6 Some pseudo-scholars have seen in the genealogy some significant omission of Brahmin teachers. There are different lines of teaching as there are separate beams from the central Sun. The teaching must be given only to *adhikaris* (those

fit for initiation) These will lead other fit persons to the truth. “स्वयं तीर्णः परान् तारयति ”

7. The Yoga is called *Avyaya* as it gives the eternal fruit of Moksha

एवं परंपराप्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः ।

स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परतप ॥ २ ॥

The royal seers knew what it was they thus handed down in uninterrupted succession. This yoga, by long lapse of time, has declined in the world, O slayer of foes.

#### NOTES

1 The importance of uninterrupted transmission of knowledge is stated in this verse

2 The yoga declined because it came into the hands of those who were not strong of soul  
दुर्बलानजितेन्द्रियान्प्राप्य नष्टं योगम् (Sri Sankaracharya)

स एवायं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः सनातनः ।

सक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम् ॥

The very same eternal Yoga has been declared to thee today by me, because thou art my devotee and my friend; it is the supreme secret.

## NOTES

1 The knowledge has to be conserved and imparted to good men. The Scripture says

‘विद्या इ वे प्राप्नोमामगमाम ॥ पापमाशुषाण्डहमस्मि ।  
असूयकाया नृत्रयेऽयताय न मा मृषा बीजवती तथा स्वाम् ।’

अर्जुन उवाच—

अगर भवतो ज म पर ज्ञ म विरस्यत ।  
कथमेतद्विजानीया त्वमादौ प्रोक्तवानिति ॥ ४ ॥

Arjuna said —

Your birth was recent, whereas the birth of the Sun God was ancient. How can I know that you declared this at the beginning ?

## NOTES

1 The old controversy as to whether Arjuna knew the divinity of Sri Krishna or not and why he put the question is not of much interest. We may take it that he put it to know the full truth from the divine lips and to make his question a means of enlightening humanity for all time.

भीमशयानुवाच—

यद्विनि मे व्यतीतानि जन्मानि तव चार्जुन ।  
तान्यहं वेद सर्वाणि न त्वं वेत्स्य परतप ॥ ५ ॥

2 Arjuna had two doubts 1 Did the Lord, incarnate in another body, teach the Sun God ? If so, how could he remember that while he (Arjuna) could not remember his past actions ? 2 If the Lord, incarnate in this very body, taught the Sun-God, how could this body have existed at the beginning of creation ? The present verse contains the solution of the first doubt

3 The Jiva is तिरोभूतज्ञानशक्तिः and hence cannot remember the past births His body is due to Karma (कर्मवश) The Lord is अत्रतिद्वतज्ञानशक्तिः and to him the Past, the Present and the Future is one Infinite Present His incarnation is due to His mercy and not due to any Karma.

4. The Lord uses *prakṛ* to show that Arjuna may be a vanquisher of outer enemies but it is more difficult to vanquish the inner enemies

अजोऽपि सन्नम्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।  
प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय सम्पान्स्यात्ममायया ॥ ६ ॥

Though I am unborn and am of eternal nature and though I am the Lord of all beings, self controlling mine own *Prakṛiti*, I incarnate through my *Maya*.

### NOTES

1 The Lord's incarnation is not due to any desire. आत्मकामस्य क्व स्पृहा । लोकावतु सीमादेवस्यम् ।

2 The Lord's Auspicious Form is Eternal नित्यैव सा जगन्मूर्ति ।

3 The Lord's Incarnation is unlike the *Jiva's* reincarnation. The former is due to His unfettered Mercy the latter is due to *Karmic* compulsion. Both are however eternal.

4. The Lord though master of *Prakṛiti*, is through His *Maya* born by his gracious wish to be embodied in *Prakṛiti* to save erring humanity जगत्पमानो बहुधा विजायते—says *Śruti* (Scripture)

5 God's immanence and transcendence and

His omniscience and omnipotence are in no way inconsistent with His gracious incarnation.

पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते ।

पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

6 The doctrine of Incarnation is the sole possession and peculiar glory of Hinduism

7. There are full incarnations i.e पूर्णवतार (like Krishna), and also *Amsavataaras* (अंशवतार) i.e partial manifestations

8. A beautiful stanza in the Bhagavata says that the Lord's birth as son to human beings is like the birth of the full moon in the Eastern sky—an occasion and not an effect.

देवक्या देवरूपिण्या विष्णु सर्वगुहाशय ।

आविरासीद्यथा प्राच्या दिशिन्दुरिव पुष्कलः ॥

(X Skandha, 3rd Adhyaya, Verse 8)

9. God uses Prakriti to disclose human manifestation But He is the lord of Prakriti while the jiva's human embodiment is due to the power of Prakriti

10 The three Indian schools of thought quarrel over the reality or the apparent character of the incarnation and the significance of Maya But the fight is more apparent than real In relation

to the Cosmos the Lord has various दिव्यमन्त्रविग्रहः Apart from such relation to the world He is Sacchi-  
tananda. Emphasis on either aspect brings about  
the quarrels of logicians. But the scripture is clear  
enough on the point. Whether the embodiment  
is called श्रुतस्वरूप or अत्राकृत, the fight is mainly one of  
words and not one of facts.

11 It has been well said

देवानां अयसिऽयस्यमादिममति सा यदा ।  
उत्पद्येति तदा लोके सा नित्याभ्यभिधीयत ॥

12 If He who is beyond the planes of mind  
and speech and sight can come into the plane of  
mind is there anything to obstruct His coming  
into the plane of speech or the plane of vision?

13 The following verses are beautiful and  
reveal to us beautiful aspects of the same truth

कृष्णमेतमवेहि त्वमात्मानमखिलारमणाम् ।  
अदिताय सोऽप्यत्र देहीवामाति मायया ॥  
अहो मायवमहो मायय नन्व ॥ यमवीकृतम् ।  
यस्मिन् परमानन्द पूर्णं ब्रह्म सनातनम् ॥

(*Krishnakarnamrita*)

14. The two words प्रकृति and माया relate to the  
same truth माया तु प्रकृति विद्या. They are both used  
here to indicate the material and the power  
देवात्मसक्ति स्वरूपैर्निगूढम् । Sri Sankaracharya says in

his Sutra Bhashya . स्यात्परमेश्वरस्यापीच्छावशान्मायामय रूपं साधकानुग्रहार्थम् । Sri Ramanujacharya says that माया means संकल्प. Sri Madhvacharya says that it means ज्ञान or इच्छा. Sri Venkatanatha objects to this. But in the light of what I have stated above it is clear that these meanings are not in vital conflict with the proper advaitic conception of *Maya* distinguishing between Maya in relation to the Cosmos and Maya in relation to Brahman.

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।

अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥ ७ ॥

O Bharata, whenever there is the weakening of Dharma and there is the rise of Adharma, I create Myself

### NOTES

1. *Dharma* referred to here is Varnashrama Dharma, the source of all good here and hereafter. Such is the description and interpretation in Sri Sankaracharya's Bhashya वर्णाश्रमादिलक्षणस्य प्राणिनामभ्युदयनिश्रेयससाधनस्य

2. Dhanapati says that the Lord indicates that Arjuna, being a man born in the holy land and the line of Bharata should not act against Dharma



and that hence he is addressed by the Lord as Bharata in this verse

8 The Lord says that He incarnates whenever Dharma is overborne by Adharma

4. It is not to be understood that the Lord has an effect the suppression of Adharma only by incarnating in the world His will is enough. But out of His grace to show his beauty and Love to all and draw their eyes and hearts to His lotus feet and to establish Dharma by precept and practice He incarnates in the world Sri Madhvacharya says न न मनैव परिनागादिकं कायमिति नियम । तर्थापि लीळया स्वभावेन यथेष्टकारी । तथा शोक । देवस्यैव स्वभावोऽयम् । लोकेषु लीला देवस्यम् ।

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।  
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥ ८ ॥

For the protection of the righteous and the destruction of the unrighteous and for the firm establishment of Dharma, I incarnate from yuga to yuga

#### NOTES

1 The Incarnation does not wait till there is नाश (destruction) of धर्म He comes when there is क्षय (waning) of Dharma and when there is

the rising up (अभ्युत्थान) which is far less than the triumph of Adharma

2 These are times when He comes himself as in the case of Lord Krishna. At other times we have *Amsavatahas* and *Avesavatahas*. The present stanza and the preceding stanza refer to these two facts

3 The important thing to remember is that in both cases the cause is His grace and His incarnation is not like our birth which is कर्मवश (due to the power of *Karma*)

4 Incarnations take place more than once in the same yuga when the conditions require the Lord's incarnation

5. 'Sri Madhvacharya well refers to a scriptural passage which says

पूर्वोऽयमस्यात्र न किञ्चिदाप्य तथापि सर्वाः कुरुते प्रवृत्तीः ।

6 Such punishing of the wicked also is for their good and out of love and grace. The निग्रह (punishment) is really *Anugraha* (grace). It is well said लालने ताडने मातुर्नकारुण्य हि यथार्थके । तद्वदेव महेशस्य नियन्तुर्गुण-दोषयो ॥

जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।

त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥ ९ ॥

He who thus truly knows my divine birth and action, does not on leaving the body attain birth again but attains Me, O Arjuna

## NOTES.

1 He who knows and realises the Lord truly attains Him

2 तस्यैव तस्य — स्वभावे (nature)

वीतरागमयक्रोधा मम्मया मामुपाश्रिता ।

यहो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भाषमागता ॥ १० ॥

Freed from attachment, fear and anger realising oneness with me, taking refuge in Me —many persons, purified by the austerity of wisdom, have attained My being

## NOTES

1 Knowledge is the true and effective liberator The Lord says न हि ज्ञानेन सर्वत्र परित्रमिह विद्यते ।

2. परम तपः is thus defined मनस्यन्त्रियानां च वैशाम्यं तपः It is the steady direction of the mind and the senses towards Him

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव मज्जाम्यहम् ।

मम धर्मेभ्योऽनुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥ ११ ॥

In whatever way men approach me, even

so do I come to them. O Partha, from all directions, men tread the path that leads to me.

### NOTES

1. The fruit is proportioned to the desire and the endeavour Those who desire fruits lower than Moksha get them He gives jnana to the Mumukshu. He gives Moksha to those who yearn for liberation and practise perfect renunciation as stated in the last verse The Lord says later on

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मा जना. सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।

आर्तो जिज्ञासुर्योर्योगी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥

2. Sri Nilakantha well says that he who loves or hates man who is God's reflection loves or hates God and gets fitting fruit This does not mean God's kindness or unkindness but such is His law which is also Love He says ततश्च मद्विबभूते प्राणिजाते यथा यः प्रीतिं द्वेष वा करोति तस्मिन्प्रतिबिंबभूतेऽहमपि प्रीतिं च द्वेषं च करोमि । बिंबपूजापरिभूवौ प्रतिबिंब एव संक्रामतोऽतो न मम वैषम्यनैर्घृण्ये स्त । तस्माच्छ्रेयोऽर्थिना सर्वस्य कल्याणायैव यति-तव्यमिति भावः ।

3 A passage in the Agneya Purana says

अन्यदैवतपूजापि यस्मिन्नन्ते समर्पिता ।

स्वर्गादिफलहेतु स्यान्नान्यथा त भजेद्धरिम् ॥

4. Hence the Lord has no preferences The

fruit is proportioned to the desire and the end of  
your

काङ्क्षन्त कमणा सिद्धिं यजन्त इह देवताः ।

क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लाफ सिद्धिमवति कमजा ॥ १२ ॥

Those who desire the fulfilment and success of actions worship the gods because the successful fruition of actions is quickly attained in the world of men

### NOTES

1 The Lord says that all do not realise the supreme Lord because desirous of quick fruitions of actions men seek the grace of various deities by worship. They are unable to rise to the heights of निष्कामकर्म and निष्कामभक्ति. But even they tread His path because such worship will generate eventually Nishkama Karma and Bhakti and lead to the attainment of the Supreme

2. The Lord says later on

येऽप्यन्यदेवतामक्षा यजन्ते धृष्ट्यान्विताः ।

तेऽपि मामेव क्रीन्ते य मम-अविधिपूर्वकम् ॥

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मधिभागम् ।

तस्य कर्तारमपि मां विद्ध्यकर्तारमव्ययम् ॥ १३ ॥

The fourfold caste division was created by me

through differentiations of Guna and Karma (quality and action) Though I am the creator of it, know that I am the eternal non-doer and witness

### NOTES

1 The Lord explains why it is that men take to diverse forms of search and worship It is owing to their potential deeds and desires that have led to their birth They follow My path as their birth into the various castes is due to My direction It is on earth that men do work as the result of potential deeds and desires and attain to the lower or the higher fruitions according to their faith and endeavour

2 चातुर्वर्ण्यं has been defined as चतुर्णां वर्णानां हितं चातुर्वर्ण्यम् ।

3 Diverseness of desires and deeds is due to diverseness of initial endowment of potential desires and deeds Sri Madhusoodana says शरीरारभकगुणवैभवादेव न सर्वे समानस्वभावाः . But all tend eventually towards His path and all fulfil their being by work and worship.

4 Nilakantha says that the Lord's view is that He has created the world of men conformably to deeds and desires, and as all the devatas are His

children worship to thee also pleaseth Him  
 चतुर्धातुर्भ्यं पुण्यकर्मण्यं गृह तदाऽऽवदत्तानामपि मनुष्याणां श्रीत्या  
 विदुषिष तदात्या ममेव कृमरस्तीत्ययः ।

5 गुणकर्मिणां यः — Divergence of qualities and deeds are the cause and the effect of births. These are the result of creation and not subject to human alterations. But this does not mean any disparagement or inequality. Certain qualities and deeds are common to all (सामान्यम्) others are differentiated according to birth निष्कामकर्म in the long of the actions enjoined on each caste and श्रेयः which is common to all bring the same blessed fruits to all. Divergence of actions does not mean divergence of hearts. The caste system is perfectly compatible with peace, love and democratic equality and is in fact the only secure basis of these.

न मा कमाणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्मफले सृष्ट्वा ।

इति मां याऽभिजानाति कर्मभिन स पश्यते ॥ १४ ॥

He who knows that actions do not bind me and that I have no desire for the fruits of action is himself not bound by its actions

NOTES.

1. The Lord says that his action not being due to desire but being due to grace and mercy

do not fetter him with the bonds of reincarnation and birth He is always Perfect and Free.  
आप्तकामस्य का स्पृहा.

2 He who realises God like this is himself freed from the fetters of birth -because in him also the drivings of desire and the false sense of कर्तृत्व (agency) cease to be

3 The Ishopanishad says well

कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजिविषेच्छत समाः ।

एव त्वयि नान्यथेतोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरे ॥

4 Naradiya Purana says

कर्तापि भगवान्विष्णुरकर्तेति च कथ्यते ।

तस्य कर्ता यतो नान्य. स्वतन्त्रत्वान्महात्मन ॥

5 God's actions are due to grace and mercy and not to desire and passion

अकाक्षन्नपि देवोऽसौ नेच्छते लोकवत्परः ।

न ह्याग्रहस्तस्य विष्णोर्ज्ञान कामो हि तस्य तु ॥

6 Realising Him and His *Leelas* results in our attaining similar freedom from the bondage of actions

ज्ञात्वा तमेन मनसा हृदा च भूयो न मृत्युमुपयाति विद्वान् ।

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वैरपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।

कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् ॥ १५ ॥



Knowing thus, action was performed by the ancient seekers after liberation. Do thou, therefore, perform action as did our forefathers in the olden time.

## NOTES

1. If we have not yet realised Truth we must do our duty for the attainment of purity and vision. If we have realised it we must do duty for the sake of the proper guidance of the world. Sri Sanharacharya says: यथातमइत्तं तदात्मव्यपि तथापि वे लोकप्रदायम् ।

2. That the path has been trodden by the ancient seekers and seers is a proof of its being the right path.

A beautiful stanza in the Bhagavata says.

एष एष हि लोकानां शिवः पन्थाः सनातनः ।

य एवं चानुवर्तस्वुर्मत्प्रमाणं जनाशनः ॥

किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कथयोऽप्यत्र मोहिताः ।

तप्ते कर्म प्रयस्याभि यज्जात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽश्रुमात् ॥ १६ ॥

Even sages are bewildered as to what is action and what is non action. I shall therefore declare to you what is action, by knowing which you shall be freed from the bondage of inauspiciousness (i.e., samsara or birth and death)

## NOTES

1 The Lord emphasised in the previous verse the fact that the auspicious path of Dharma was that trodden by the ancient seekers after liberation. Why did the Lord emphasize in this? Was there any difficulty in knowing the path? Yes, says the Lord, it is difficult to know the true path. I shall reveal it to you.

2 Further, what is required is not a blind following of the path trodden by the ancient seekers, but an intelligent following of it. अवश्यकवेऽपि न कर्मणो गतानुगतिकतया बुद्धान् कर्तव्यम् । किं तु “ज्ञात्वा धर्माणि कुर्वीत” इति वचनात् कर्माश्रितं किञ्चिद्विशेषं ज्ञापयितुमुपोद्घातयति (Sridhara)

3 Sri Ramanujacharya says that अकर्म means the nature of the soul, अकर्मैति कर्तुरात्मनो यथात्मज्ञानमुच्यते ।

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः ।

अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः ॥ १७ ॥

One must know the nature of the enjoined action; one must know also the nature of what is the prohibited action; and one must further know the nature of non-action. Mysterious is the true nature of action.

## NOTES

1 Doing enjoined actions and refraining from prohibited actions and realising the detached nature of the soul—must be intelligent acts and not acts blindly done

2 The Chhandogya Upanishad says अदेव विद्य या करोति धनस्योपनिषदा तद्वत् वीर्यवत्तर भवति ।

3. The Lord means to lay down here the true nature of *Pravritti* and *Vivritti*.

4 Sri Ramanujacharya takes अकर्म to mean ज्ञान and विकर्म to mean विविधकर्म or निष्कर्मैवितिककाम्य कर्माणि ।

5 Sri Madhva interprets कर्मणः as— कर्म न (viz Karma is from God) So also विकर्म and अकर्म are from God. They flow from a Divine cause and hence the difficulty to fathom them.

अज्ञात्वा मायावान् कस्य कर्माकर्मविकर्मकम् ।

वर्धनं याति हि मुने कुतो मुक्तिश्च तद्धिना ॥

कर्मव्यकर्म य पश्येत्कर्मणि च कर्म यः ।

स बुद्धिमान्मुमुक्षुः स युक्तः कश्चकर्मकृत् ॥ १८ ॥

He who sees non-action in action and action in non-action is the wise one among men; he is the *yogi* and he is the full performer of action



and we do not protect him एवमीदृशम्यमकमापि सत्त्वस्या  
परिद्राव्यामायाद्विक्रममपि पश्यस्यति ।

6 Even karma becomes *akarma* (inaction) if there is no *śraddhā* faith and *likarman* if there is *humm* (ostentation)

अथयथा कृतं तत् तपश्चत कृतं च यत् ।

असादृत्युच्यत पापं न च तत्प्रत्य नो इह ॥

चरदारि कमायमयकराण्य मय तपश्चतत्यन्ययाकृतानि ।

मानाप्रहायमुत मानमौन माननापीतमुत मानवत् ॥

6 Śridhara points out that the non-doing of an enjoined act is like the doing of a prohibited act in the production of evil consequences अकममपि वा  
विहिताकरणे कर्म यः पश्येत्तस्य प्रत्यायात्पादकत्वेन सम्भवेत्तुस्तत् ।  
Nilakantha also says विहिताकरण प्रतिषिद्धकरणे च कर्म  
शिवेव भवत् । अकमतो विध्यत्कर्म प्रहारादपि कृयात् न स्वकर्मापि  
तादृशदृष्ट्या कुर्यादित्यर्थः ।

7 The true non action is when through action action falls off and the soul attains प्राप्ती स्थितिः ।

न कमाणि सजयो ॥ कर्मभिस्त्वज्यते ह्यसौ ।

8 Another philosophic meaning of this stanza is given by Madhusoodana He who sees *Ikarma* (Brahma) in *karman jnana rupa* (action of the form of jnana) and who sees *karman* (the whole cosmos) in *Akarman* the subject is the truly wise man

9. Sri Madhvacharya gives us another aspect. He says that we must see *akarma* (that we are not the real doers and that god is the real agent) in *karma* and that we must see *karma* (god's ever watchful protective work) even in *akarma* (our inaction and sleep). Karma, according to this great teacher, means here *jiva*, and *akarma* means god. कर्मणि क्रियमाणे सति अकर्म यः पर्येद्विष्णोरेव कर्म नाहं चित्प्रतिबिम्ब किञ्चित्करोमीति ।

10 Sri Ramanujacharya says that *akarma* is *jnana*, that *karmayoga* and *jnanayoga* (in the sense of the realisation of the nature of the *jiva*, आत्मयाथात्म्य-ज्ञान), are interdependent and interconnected, that the proper doing of *karma* is when we know the real nature of the soul and that the realisation of the nature of the soul is an internal *karma*.

11 The idea contained in this verse is thus stated in Srimad Bhagavata

यथा भ्रमरिकादध्या आम्यतीव नभोन्तरम् ।

चित्ते कर्तरि तत्रात्मा कर्तृवाहं धिया स्मृत ॥

12 The commentaries contain mutually destructive criticisms in regard to the meanings and aspects indicated above. I strongly deprecate the revival of such controversies, because when we adopt the method which I beg leave to adopt and to suggest as the right method of a compositeness of out-

look in which all angles of vision have a place in the fulness of realisation all concordant notes have a place and have each its due place.

13. Janaka and Suka are our highest examples to illustrate the meaning of this great verse.

यस्य सर्वे समारम्भा कामसकल्पयजिता ।  
नानाभिर्दुष्कमाज तमाहु पण्डित युधा ॥ १९ ॥

The wise men call him a man of realisation whose undertakings are all free from desire and egotism and whose actions are burnt up by the fire of wisdom.

### NOTES

1. *hankalpa* (egotism) is the cause of *kama* (desire)

2. The wise man's work will be due to his desire of helping the world's evolution (*lokasangraha*) or the bare maintenance of his body (*जीवनमात्रार्थ*)

3. The scripture says.

यदा सर्वे ऋण्यन्ते कामा यदस्य हृदि स्थिताः ।  
अथ मर्योऽमृतो भवत्यत्र मदा समन्तते ॥

4. The conquest of the bondage of *karma* is thus described in the following *sutra* :

तदधिगम उत्तरपूषापयारश्चयविनाशः तद्वयदद्यात् ।

5. Sri Ramanuja thus beautifully describes  
*sankalpa* प्रकृत्या तद्गुणैश्चात्मानमेकीकृत्यानुसंधान सङ्कल्पः ।

त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासङ्गं नित्यवृत्तौ निराश्रयः ।

कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किञ्चित्करोति सः ॥ २० ॥

Having abandoned clinging to the fruits of actions, full of eternal contentment and not dependent on anything else, though engaged in doing action, he does not do anything

#### NOTES.

1. He does his work to help the world or to prevent censure by the pure. He is contented and self-dependent.

2 When work blossoms into worship and worship fructifies into realisation, the bondage of work ceases.

निराशीर्यतचित्तात्मा त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः ।

शारीरं केवलं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥ २१ ॥

Without desireful expectation controlling the mind and the body and the senses, having relinquished all acquisitiveness, doing only such acts as are necessary to maintain the body, he does not commit any sin.



## NOTES

1 मनः, बुद्धि, चित्त, and अहंकार are aspects of mind. They are reason, determinative faculty, memory and egoism.

2. In the case of ascetics various abstentions are enjoined.

मधु मांस च मय च ताम्बूल तन्मयोपधम ।

आभ्यान्यथै यवश्चातपा कान्ता च काञ्चनम् ॥

परञ्जालामसतुष्टो ऽ द्वातीतो विमस्मर ।

समं सिद्धावसिद्धौ च कृत्वापि न नियम्यते ॥ २२ ॥

Content with what is got without effort, unfettered by the pairs of opposite, free from envy and hate, even minded in attainment and non-attainment—he though doing actions, is not bound thereby.

## NOTES

1 The same idea is conveyed in the verse

अभाषितमधवक्ष्यतमुपधम परञ्जया ।

2. Ascetics should have the minimum of possessions.

कौपीनमुगलं वासः कम्प्यौ क्षीतनिवारिणीम् ।

पादुके चापि एहीयात्कुम्भाभ्यान्यस्य संमहम् ॥

3. These verses give us the key to that power of transmutation by which actions lose their ironness of binding power and become the gold of bliss.

गतसङ्गस्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः ।

यज्ञायाचरतः कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते ॥ २३ ॥

In the case of him from whom attachment has gone, who is liberated, whose mind is centred steadfastly in wisdom and who does work in a spirit of sacrificial offering to God, all action dissolves away.

#### NOTES.

1 The same idea is expressed in this verse also. These verses teach us the mystic secret of making actions the means of liberation

2. It is well said

न्यायागतधनस्तत्त्वज्ञानानिष्ठोऽतिथिप्रिय ।

श्राद्धकृत्सत्यवादी च गृहस्थोऽपि विमुच्यते ॥

ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।

ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना ॥ २४ ॥

The means of oblation is Brahman, the clarified butter offered is Brahman ; the offering is by the priest who is Brahman in the fire which is

Brahman, the place of attainment is Brahman through the realisation of action as Brahman

### NOTES

1 In the case of the wise who work for loka sangraha the realisation of God in everything is full and perfect and in their case *karma* is really *akarma*. This is what is called यथाकृत्याय (the motive determines the fruit)

2. In him there will be no distinctions of desires or expectations, and no ideas of क्रिया, कारण and फल. Such is ज्ञानयत्.

3. The Vartikakara says well

अरक्ष्यवद्भार हि दृढं पशु न वीक्ष्यत ।

दृढं पशुनि छिद्य न अरक्ष्याष्टिः कृतः च

4 Sri Ramanuja, consistently with his philosophy explains the underlying idea thus मद्भारम कृतया मद्भूतमामस्वरूपं गन्तव्यम् । मुमुक्षुना क्रियमाणं कम परमं भ्यामकमेवेत्यनुप धानयुक्तया धानाकारं माक्षादात्मावसाकनसाधनं ज्ञाननिष्ठाभ्यवधाननेत्यर्थः ।

5 Sri Madhva appropriately quotes the following verse from Padma Purana.

त्वदधीनं यतः सर्वमतं सर्वो भवानिति ।

6 The difference between the school of thought which says तत्त्वरूपं and that which says

तदर्धनं is in relation to what the former calls the पराकाष्ठा. So far as the negation of egoism and the affirmation of bliss through realisation of God are concerned, both agree. In the present verse it is the latter aspect that is stressed and we should not bring in discussions about the former.

दैवमेवापरे यज्ञं योगिनः पर्युपासते ।

ब्रह्माग्नावपरे यज्ञं यज्ञेनैव यजुह्वति ॥ २५ ॥

Some yogis perform sacrifices to the Devas (god-), others offer the self as sacrifice by the self alone in the fire of Brahman.

### NOTES

1. The former half refers to the performance of Darsapoornamasa, Jyotishtoma, and other sacrifices. The latter refers to the realisation of the identity of soul and God through meditation. Sri Sankara says

सोपाधिकस्यात्मनो निरुपाधिकेन परब्रह्मस्वरूपेणैव यदर्शनं स तस्मिन्  
होमः तं कुर्वन्ति ब्रह्मात्मैकत्वदर्शननिष्ठा इत्यर्थः ।

श्रोत्रादीनीन्द्रियाण्यन्ये संयमाग्निषु जुह्वति ।

शब्दादीन्विषयानन्ये इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुह्वति ॥ २६ ॥

Some offer as sacrifice the ears and other senses in the fires of self-control. Others offer sound and other sense-objects in the fires of the senses.

## NOTES.

1. सम is धारणा, ध्यान and समाधि The Homa stated in the first half of the verse is perfecting प्रत्याहार into धारणा, ध्यान and समाधि

2. The *homa* (oblation) stated in the second half of the verse is the sensing of permitted things by excluding forbidden things Sri Sankara says.

धात्रादिभेदवर्द्धप्रद्वज होम मन्यन्ते ।

3. These are the gradations of self control resorted to so that we may become experts in self control which alone leads to the bliss of self realisation

4. That different forms of self control lead to different attainments is thus stated in the Yoga sutras- भुवनज्ञानं सूर्यं समवाचन्द्रं ताराम्यूहज्ञानं चन्द्ररूपे क्षुतिः पादानिष्ठं । If the ear is self controlled in the *Ana hata Dhyan*, *Dasanadas* (10 sounds) are heard

सर्वाणामिन्द्रियकर्माणि प्राणकर्माणि चापरे ।

आत्मसमययोगाभौ जुहोति ज्ञानदीपिते ॥ २७ ॥

Some offer all the actions of the senses and of the vital energy as oblation in the fire of the yoga of self-control kindled and illumined by wisdom.

## NOTES

1. The five *gnanendriyas* the five *karmendriyas* and the five vital energies and *Manas* and *Buddhi*

form the Linga Sarira. The homa of this in Nirodha Samadhi means the absorption of it in the Atman.

2 Sri Ramanuja says मनस इन्द्रियप्रवणतानिवारणे प्रयतन्त इत्यर्थः ।

द्रव्ययज्ञस्तपोयज्ञा योगयज्ञस्तथापरे ।

स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च यतयः सशितव्रताः । २८ ॥

Some perform the sacrifice of wealth; some perform the sacrifice of austerity; others perform the austerity of Yoga; others perform the sacrifice of Vedic study; yet others perform the sacrifice of the investigation of the meaning of the Veda, others are practiced strivers who have perfected and fulfilled vows.

### NOTES

1 द्रव्ययज्ञः. Those philanthropists who sink tanks, wells, etc., and form flower gardens etc. These acts of philanthropy come under दत्त and पूत.

वापीकूपतटाकादिदेवतार्थतनानि च ।

अन्नप्रदानमारामं पूतमित्यभिधीयते ॥

शरणागतसंत्राण भूतानां चाप्यर्हिसनम् ।

बहिर्वेदि च यद्दानं दत्तमित्यभिधीयते ॥

Sri Ramanuja says द्रव्ययज्ञाः न्यायतो द्रव्याण्युपादाय

द्वयतापनं प्रयतन्तः । (They get wealth by proper means and use it to worship God)

2. तपोवृत्ताः—Chapter XVII verses 11 to 16 describe the tapas of body speech and mind

3. दानवृत्ताः—This refers to the *ishthina* *Yajna*

1. धर्म्मितापना — Refers to what are called *Maharritas* in the *Yoga Shashtra*. The five *yamas* are *ahimsa satya asteya brahmacharya* and *aparigraha*. If these are practised at all times in all places and under all conditions they are called *Maharritas* ते आतिदुष्कासप्रमथानवस्थिता सावभावा महाव्रतम् । Only in this way can *Kama* *Krodha* *Lobha* and *Moha* be triumphantly and finally overcome. Sri Madhusoodana says

तत्राहिंसा धर्मया क्रोधस्य प्रह्वयैर्न वस्तुविशारेण क्षमस्य, भक्षेया परिग्रहेण सन्तोषेण लोभस्य, श्रुत्यन यथापधानस्येन विवेकेन मोहस्य सम्भूतानां सर्वेषां निवृत्तिरिति दृश्यम् ।

अपाने जुहुति प्राण प्राणेष्वपान तथाऽपरे ।

प्राणापानमती द्यूता प्राणायामपरायणाः ॥ २९ ॥

Others offer as sacrifice the outgoing breath in the incoming breath and the incoming breath in the outgoing breath, thus stopping the courses of the intaken and outgoing breaths and devoted to the performance of *Pranayama*.

## NOTES.

1. This stanza refers to पूरक, रेचक, and कुम्भक

2 Patanjali says in Yoga sutras

तस्मिन्सविश्वासप्रश्वासयोगातिविच्छेदलक्षण प्राणायाम ।

3 The spiritual science of Pranayama is dealt with at greater length in Chapter VI of the Gita

4 Pranayama enables the yogi to regulate and control and restrain the flow of vital energy, leads to concentration of mind, and results in prolongation of life The transference of breathing from the realm of involuntary action to the realm of voluntary action is one of the most powerful means of enabling the mind to gain in steadiness and vision and power It leads to enfranchisement from desire and the self-direction of the mind towards God

अपरे नियताहाराः प्राणान्प्राणेषु जुह्वति ।

सर्वेऽप्येते यज्ञविदो यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषा. ॥ ३० ॥

Others who take food in measure perform the sacrifice of Pranas in Pranas All these are knowers of sacrifice and are men whose sins have been destroyed by sacrifice.

## NOTES

1. नियताहाराः In Chapter VI of the Gita the Lord says that measure in food and sleep and work



and rest is essential to Yoga (See verse 16 17) It is further said

ह्री नामा पूर्यद्भैस्तायवकं प्रपूरयत् ।

मास्तस्य प्रवातार्यं यमुपमनसमवत् ॥

2. प्राणाग्निशेषेषु जुहति—Bri Shankaracharya says that the transmutation of uncontrolled breath into controlled breath is itself described here as a *homa* or sacrifice.

3. Nilakanta says that the above words refer to the *sap* of the senses in the mind (*manas*) of the *manas* in the *chitta* and of the *chitta* in the *ahankara*.

4. Madhusoodana says that the above refers to a fourth *Pranayama* or *केवल कुम्भक* i.e., the attainment of suspended breath and *Samadhi* without going through *रेचक* or *पूरक*—in which all the *Indriyas* are controlled and are in a condition of *sap*.

5. Brihdara quotes in this connection two beautiful verses

सकारेण बहिषाति इक्षारेण विद्येतुनः ।

प्राणास्तत्र स एवाहं हस इत्यनुभिन्दयेत् ॥

यथा यथा सदाभ्यासात्मनस स्थिरता भवेत् ।

बाहुवाक्कायवृष्टिर्वा स्थिरता च तथा तथा ॥

6. The *Bruti* declares

मय्येष्टाश्चनक्षी प्राणश्चमय्येष्टान् आत्मनि ॥

7 Sri Madhavacharya quotes the following verse:

यदस्याल्पाशनं तेन प्राणाः प्राणेषु वै हुताः ॥

यश्च शिष्टानृतभुजो यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।

नायं लोकोऽत्ययश्चस्य कुतोऽन्यः कुरुसत्तम ॥३१॥

Those who partake of the ambrosial food which forms the sacrificial remains attains the Eternal Brahma. Even this world is not for the non-performer of yajna ; how then the other, O best of the Kuru line ?

### NOTES

1. The above-said sacrifices lead to God through purity of mind (*chitta suddhi*)

2. Neelakanta thinks that the yajnas refer to the daily five *yajnas* (देवऋषिपितृभूतातिथियज्ञ)

3 अयं लोकः Sri Ramanujacharya well explains this as meaning this Prakrita loka with Dharma, Artha, and Kama. The परलोक is Moksha. नायं लोकः न प्राकृतलोकः. प्राकृतलोकसंवन्धि धर्मार्थकामाख्य. पुत्र-धार्यो न सिद्ध्यति कुत इतोऽन्यो मोक्षाख्यः. पुत्रधार्यः । परमपुत्रधार्य-तया मोक्षस्य प्रसुतत्वात्तदितरपुत्रधार्योऽयं लोक इति निर्दिश्यते स हि प्राकृतः ।

एष बहुविधा यज्ञा पितृती प्रथमा मुञ्चे ।

कमजान्प्रिये तान्सर्वानप्य धात्वा विमोक्ष्यसे ॥ ३२ ॥

Thus sacrifices of various forms are elaborated in the Vedas. Know that all of them are the effects of action (physical, verbal, and mental) knowing, this, thou shalt attain liberation.

### NOTES

1. Sacrifices are thus the means and not the end or the goal. The Atman is Eternal Peace and Love and Joy. They lead to a realisation of the true nature of the Atman through Sattvajnana. अथो ह्ययं पुण्यः अथो न हि यज्ञः (Sruti.)

2. In the Paishacha Bhāṣya by Hanuman it is well said. एते यज्ञाः परमात्मनः प्रयागप्राप्तयनमूताः ।

धेयान्द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञानयज्ञ परतप ।

सर्वं कर्माणिष्ठ पाथ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥ ३३ ॥

O Parantapa, the sacrifice taking the form of wisdom is more auspicious than sacrifice of wealth and other material things. All action in its entirety, O Partha, attains its fulfilment and consummation in wisdom.

## NOTES

1 Karmas lead to fruits, wisdom is not causal but only revelatory

2 Sri Ramanujacharya thinks that in this verse the Jnana element in Karma Yoga is shown to be higher than the mere Karma element in it

3. True work is that which leads to worship and wisdom

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।

उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥ ३४ ॥

Know thou this by prostrating thyself and by frequent questions and by service The wise who have realised the Truth will then impart wisdom to you.

## NOTES

1 Reverence, interrogation, and service—all are required in the pupil In the teacher wisdom and realisation are required Else instruction has no fruitfulness उक्तज्ञानाद्भवेत्कार्यं नान्यैरिति हरेर्मतम् ॥

2 The pupil must interrogate about spiritual matters. The whole framework of the *Kenopanishad* shows thus A beautiful Stanza says

कथं बन्ध. कथं मोक्षः कस्य केन विमुच्यते ।

नित्याविद्ये कथं भूते कोऽहं दृश्यमिदं च किम् ॥

3. The Sruti says तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुयेवमभिगच्छेत्सुवि  
त्सामिः प्राप्तिव श्रद्धनिष्ठ ।

4. The quickening of truth in us can be caused only by soul acting on soul

वज्रात्पा न पुनर्मोहमेव यास्यसि पाण्डव ।

येन भूतान्यद्यो रेण द्रक्ष्यन्त्यात्मन्यद्यो मयि ॥ ३५ ॥

Having known that, you will not, O Pandava, again have any delusion as now. By knowing that, you shall realise the entirety of creation in the Atman and then in Me

#### NOTES.

1. This shows that only through the disciplines of wisdom can we attain self-realisation and God-realisation. Sri Sankaracharya says that this means self-realisation as identical with God. Sri Ramanujacharya says that it means the realisation of the true nature of all souls and their similarity to God. Identity is emphasised by the former and equality by the latter. Sri Ramanuja says that Jivas have ज्ञानाभारतया साम्य and भगवत्सत्त्वसाम्य. Sri Sankara says that the verse refers to क्षयप्रशङ्कसम् ।

अपि चेदसि पापेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पापकृत्तम ।

सर्वे ज्ञानलुपेनेय वृद्धिर्न सतरिभ्यसि ॥ ३६ ॥

Even if you are the most sinful of all sinners, you can cross all sin with the raft of wisdom.

### NOTES :

1. *Papa* (sin) includes all karmic bondage the bondage of Dharma and Adharma Sri Sankaracharya says धर्मोऽपीह मुमुक्षोः पापमुच्यते ।

2 Wisdom is the supreme purifier and burns up all Karmic taint

यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्मससात्कुर्वतेऽर्जुन ।

ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुर्वते तथा ॥ ३७ ॥

As the well-lighted fire reduces all wood to ashes, even so does the fire of wisdom reduce all actions to ashes.

### NOTES:

1 Jnana burns up all *Sanchita* (accumulated and *Agami* (future) *karmas* *Prarabdha* (that fragment of our *karmic* sum total which has begun to bear fruit) alone must be worked out The *Brahma-sutras* say

तदधिगम उत्तरापूर्वार्धयोरश्लेषविनाशौ तद्व्यपदेशात् ।

इतरस्याप्येवमसंश्लेषः पाते तु । भोगेन त्वितरे क्षपयित्वा संपद्यते ।

2 The *Srutis* says

तस्य तावदेव चिरं यावन्न विमोक्ष्येऽथ संपत्स्ये ।

निदत्त इदमपि परिउपमत् सर्वप्रथमाः ।  
 धीमन्तो नास्म कर्मोपि तस्मिन्त्य परावरे ॥  
 तद्यथा पुष्करपलाश भाषो न निरुध्यन्त  
 एवमस्मादि परिउपमत् कर्म न निरुध्यते ।  
 तद्यथेपीश्वरतमसो प्रोक्तं प्रवृत्त  
 एव हास्य गरी पाप्मानं प्रवृत्तन्त ॥

4 There are also *vikarn purushas* who as the result of *uparitas* are, though of attained wisdom, bound by the Eternal Will to the fulfilment and discharge of certain cosmic offices and functions.

'यावदपिश्चरमवाप्तार्तिरापिश्चरिष्मन्' (say the *Brahma Sutra*—)

न हि ज्ञानेन सहस्रं पपि नमिह विद्यते ।  
 तस्यैव योगसंसिद्धः कालनामनि विन्दति ॥

Verily there is in this world nothing equal to wisdom as a purifier. Therefore in due time he who is perfected in Yoga realises and attains It in the self.

#### NOTES.

1 By karma alone karma cannot be overcome  
 कर्मणा कर्मनिर्हाये नैवात्यन्तिकं दृश्यते ।

Yogasamsiddha means perfected through karma yoga and samadhi yoga (Sri Sankaracharya) Sri Ramanujacharya thinks that it means karma yoga.

अद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः ।

ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥३९॥

The man who is full of faith, who is devoted to it, and who is of controlled senses attains wisdom ; and having attained wisdom, he will attain soon the supreme peace.

### NOTES

1 अचिरेण i.e. soon This means 'at the end of Prarabdhakarma' (action which has begun to bear fruit).

2 As a light dispels darkness of its own power and not with other aid, so doth wisdom dispel karmic bondage.

3. Faith is essential अस्तीत्येवोपलब्धव्य

4 Wisdom alone effects liberation The Sruti says

ब्रह्मविदाप्नोति पर ।

ज्ञात्वा देवं मुच्यते सर्वपाशै ।

ज्ञात्वा शिव शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति ।

तमेवं विदित्वातिमृत्युमेति ।

य एतद्विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ।

अशब्दाश्रद्धानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति ।

नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मनः ॥ ४० ॥



The ignorant man, the man who has not faith, and the man who is full of doubt each of these goes to destruction neither this world nor the next nor joy comes to the man of doubt

### NOTES

1 The ignorant man can be easily saved the man of unfaith can be saved with some difficulty but the man of hopeless perversity of doubt is very difficult to save. Neelakantha says well. अज्ञः सुधेन पितृत्सिद्धुं यत्नः । अश्रुधाना यत्नेन, यत्नयामा स्यात् एव ।

2 The doubting man is the agnostic He is generally a cynic a misanthrope and a sufferer rolled into one He is a universal and unhesitating hesitator He will not trust even his friends and hence will not get the blessings of this world He will not trust Scripture and will not hence get the blessings of the other world He will not trust even his food and will lose all pleasure The man of ignorance and the man of unfaith will at least have this world and its pleasures though not the other world

3 Thus while he cannot get even परार्थस्य, what chance is there of his attaining Moksha?

योगसन्त्यस्तकमात्रं ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम् ।

आरमयन्त न कर्माणि निपद्यन्ति धनजय ॥ ४१ ॥

O Dhananjaya, actions do not bind him who has attained renunciation of work through Yoga, who has destroyed doubt through wisdom, and who is ever vigilant.

### NOTES.

1 योगसन्त्यस्तकर्म Who has come out of the bondage of Karma by making work a love-offering to God realising the Truth about eternal and non-eternal things

2 There is nothing higher than Self-Realisation The Sruti says आत्मलाभात् परं विद्यते ।

तस्मादक्षानसंभूतं हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनात्मनः ।

छित्त्वेन सशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत ॥ ४२ ॥

Therefore, cleaving asunder with the sword of wisdom the doubt born of ignorance and seated in the heart, be established in Yoga. Arise O Bharata

### NOTES

1 The simile is a military simile It is addressed to a warrior The clarion call to him at the end is, arise and march, O Soldier of God, under His Divine command

2. Arise Arise and take up thy duty in the true *Karmayogi's* spirit Thy present duty is to fight.

## GENERAL CONCLUDING REMARKS

1 The fourth chapter of the Gita is called *ज्ञानकर्मसंन्यासयोग*. In it the Lord tells us the secret of *arataras* the innermost truths of Karma yoga the various forms of Karma yoga the need for knowledge faith and self control and the supreme power of *jnana* (wisdom) Yamunacharya's *Gitarthasangraha* says well.

प्रसङ्गात्स्वभावोक्तिः कर्मणोऽकर्मताऽस्य च ।  
भक्षानस्य माहात्म्यं चतुष्पाप्याय उच्यते ॥

2 Sri Madhusoodana says  
स्वस्वानीकृत्ययापेन भास्विभ्य इतीकृते ।  
धीरेण कर्मनिष्ठा च हरिभोपसङ्गता ॥

Thus ends the Chapter  
KARMA BRAHMANIYANA YOGA.

## CHAPTER V

### Karma Sannyasa Yoga.

#### PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

1 As the Lord has taught both Karma Yoga and Karma Sannyasa, Arjuna asks which is the better of the two, and with that question the fifth chapter begins

2 Till now Karma yoga was taught and explained The Lord is going to show that it is the best means of spiritual realisation Till renunciation is attained in full, work must be done in the spirit of the true *Karma yoga* When the spirit of renunciation comes, to steady and perfect it a man may give up works and devote all time to *Samadhi yoga*. We must not prematurely take up the latter or waver between the two Madhusoodana says

तस्मादादौ भगवदर्पणबुद्ध्या निष्कामकर्मानुष्ठानादन्तःकरणशुद्धौ तीव्रेण  
वैराग्येण विविदिषायां दृढायां सर्वकर्मसंन्यास श्रवणमननादिरूपवेदान्त-  
वाक्यविचाराय कर्तव्य इति भगवतो मतम् ।

3. A beautiful stanza says

कषायपक्षि कर्मभ्यो ज्ञानं तु परमा गतिः ।

कषाये कर्मभिः पक्वे ततो ज्ञानं प्रवर्तते ॥

The Vartikakara says—

प्रत्यग्निद्रादुपासिष्य वदानुवचनादयः ।

प्रज्ञावाप्यै तु तत्त्वगमीधन्वीति भुतेवजात् ॥

The Sruti says about renunciation —

प्रज्ञानं समाप्य गृही भवद्गृहादनी मूत्वा प्रपञ्चधादि वतरपा म

द्वयमादयः प्रपञ्चद्गृहाद्वा वनाद्वा यद्वहस्य विरजतपहरेव प्रपञ्चत् ।

1 Sri Ramanujacharya develops his doctrine thus. In the 3rd chapter Karma yoga was taught. In the 4th chapter the superiority of the jnana element in Karma yoga was stressed. In this chapter the importance of jnananishtha in Karma yoga for leading to a realisation of the true nature of the jiva (as apart from God) is shown. He says. चतुर्थेऽध्याये कमयोगस्य ज्ञानाकारतापूर्वकस्वरूपभेदा ज्ञानासक्त्य च प्राधान्यमुक्तम् । ज्ञानयागाधिकारिणोऽपि कर्मयोगस्यान्तःतत्त्वज्ञानत्वात्प्रभावत्वात्पुनरुक्तमिदमेतदुक्तत्वाच्च ज्यायस्त्व सृतीय एवाहम् । इदानीं कर्मयोग-स्मारकप्रतिष्ठापनस्यै ज्ञाननिष्ठायाः श्रेष्ठ्य च कर्मयोगान्तर्गतोक्तानुसन्धानप्रकारे च प्रतिपाद्य तन्मूलं ज्ञानं च विस्तोष्यते ।

5 Sri Madhvacharya says that this chapter develops the Karma yoga taught in Chapter III. सृतीयध्यायेनोक्तमेव कमयोग प्रपञ्चवत्यनेनाध्यायेन ।

6 This chapter is called कमधन्यसयोग ।

7 It seems to me that the central truth is that Karma yoga should be performed with an increase

ing realisation of the Eternal Truth, till at last the realisation remains and work falls off, just as in a tree the blossom shines forth till at last the fruit appears and the blossom is shed न कर्मणि त्यजेद्योगी कर्मभिस्त्यज्यते यसौ । We must not be carried away by technical differences of doctrine Making allowance for the verbal differences we must see the real and essential oneness of doctrine and accept it and act on it.

अर्जुन उवाच

संन्यासं कर्मणां कृष्ण पुनर्योगं च शंससि ।

यच्छ्रेय एतयोरेकं तन्मे ब्रूहि सुनिश्चितम् ॥ १ ॥

Arjuna said

Thou praisest renunciation of action as well as the performance of action, O Krishna Tell me decisively which is the more auspicious of the two.

### NOTES

1 Sri Sankaracharya points out that the choice is as between कर्मयोग and कर्मसंन्यास in the case of one who has not attained realisation In the case of him who has attained realisation there is no scope for Karma as he has attained cosmic consciousness.

2 कृष्ण He is so called because he is पापकर्षण, भक्षदुःखकर्षण, सदानन्दरूप । (the destroyer of sins and sorrows and the giver of bliss )



न कर्मणामनारम्भानैष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।  
न च संन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥

श्रीभगवानुवाच

सन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकराद्युभौ ।  
तयोस्तु कर्मसंन्यासात्कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते ॥ २ ॥

The Blessed Bhagavan said

Sannyasa (renunciation of action) and Karma Yoga both lead to bliss. But of the two Karma Yoga is better than Karma Sannyasa.

### NOTES

1 The Lord has made himself quite clear here and I fail to see how there can be any possible controversy about His meaning. कर्मयोग leads easily through *chittasuddhi* to *jnana* and to *Moksha*.

2 Karmayoga has got in its favour सौकर्य (its being easy), शैघ्र्य (its being quick in fructification) and अनपाय (its not being dangerous).

ज्ञेयः स नित्यसंन्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न काङ्क्षति ।  
निर्व्वन्द्वो हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात्प्रमुच्यते ॥ ३ ॥

He (the Karmayogi) should be known as the *Nitya Sannyasi* (the perpetual renouncer) who does not hate or desire; for he is free from



the *drandias* (the pairs of opposites), O mighty armed ! and is easily set free from bondage

## NOTES

1 The true Karma Yogi is better than the unfit or false Sannyasi. But the true Karma Yogi and the true Sannyasi have and reach the same goal. Even as between them the former has an easier and quicker and less dangerous path

2. The *drandias* i.e. heat and cold joy and pain etc

साध्ययोगौ पृथग्दाला प्रवदन्ति न परिहृता ।

एकमप्यास्थित सम्यगुभयोर्धिन्दते फलम् ॥ ४ ॥

Children, not sages, called *Samkhya* and *Yoga* as separate and diverse. If one is rooted in either he gets the fruit of both

## NOTES.

1 How can any one have doubts or disputes after such a declaration? There is *एकत्व* (sameness of result)

2. Nilakanta says that this verse dispels the following doubt. In Karma Sanyasa there is fear of defection (*पराधम*) and in Karma Yoga there is the burden of work (*कर्मभ्रम*). Which is the better of the two? The Lord says that both have the same fruit

3 The फल is stated by Sri Ramanujacharya as *Atmaalokana* (realisation of the Self)

यत्सांख्यैः प्राप्यते स्थानं तद्योगैरपि गम्यते ।

एकं सांख्यं च योगं च यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥ ५ ॥

The attainment reached by the *Samkhya*s is reached by the *Yogins* as well. He sees well who sees *Samkhya* and *Yoga* as one

#### NOTES

1 The same idea is elaborated in this verse

2 Karma Yoga leads to ज्ञाननिष्ठा It has been well said यान्यतोऽन्यानि जन्मानि तेषु नूनं कृतं भवेत् ।

सत्कृत्य पुरुषेणैह नान्यथा ब्रह्मणि स्थितिः ॥

संन्यासस्तु महाबाहो दुःखमाप्नुमयोगतः ।

योगयुक्तो मुनिर्ब्रह्म न चिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥ ६ ॥

Renunciation of work, O mighty-armed ! is difficult to attain without Yoga The man of Yoga who is full of devotion attains Brahman soon.

#### NOTES

1 योगयुक्तः Sri Sankaracharya thus explains its meaning well. वैदिकेन कर्मयोगेनेश्वरसमर्पितेन फलनिरपेक्षेण युक्तः। (Having the scriptural Karma Yoga, dedicated to God and unexpectant of fruits).

2. The Sruti says शान्तो दान्त उपरतस्वितिक्षुः समाहितो भूत्वात्मन्येवात्मानं पश्यति ।

3. The following verses thus describe well this *Sadhana*.

विन्दीकृत्य त्रयमाम पुद्गावारोप्य नियतम् ।

विनयीत्यमृतीस्त्वह्ना विष्ठयिदपुरापत ॥

एषाऽभ्युपायः सर्वत्र वेदान्तेषु प्रतिष्ठितः ।

तच्चमस्यादिवाक्यायज्ञानोत्पत्त्ययमावस्य ॥

4 If an unfit man prematurely performs कर्म-  
सम्यास he becomes कर्ममग्नयम्रष्ट्र i.e. one who has  
lapsed from Karma and Brahma. Hence Karma  
Yoga is the easier and surer and better path.

5 The real question is, what is the force of  
the वैराग्य ? Do you feel such *Vairagya* that during  
all waking moments you are prepared to spend all  
your time—till death arrives—in study and medita-  
tion? Then the path of विविदिषाकर्मसम्यास may be taken  
Yet pause and hesitate before you take the plunge  
The path is difficult. The path of Karma Yoga has  
got a real and growing element of *Sannyasa* and is  
the easier and surer path and leads to the same goal  
Venkatanatha the author of 'Brahmanandagiri  
says: तदेवाद्यं तीवरे वैराग्ये सन्यासः, तदभावे कर्मभोग इति  
व्यवस्थासमवायः कोऽपि विरोधः ॥

6. Sri Ramanujacharya says that ज्ञानाय  
means Jnana Yoga and that Karma Yoga is better  
and easier and surer than Jnana Yoga in leading us

to Atmasakshatkara (Self-realisation). According to him it is after this that Bhakti leads us to Bhagavatsakshatkara (God-realisation).

योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः ।

सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥ ७ ॥

He who has attained Yoga, whose mind is pure, who has conquered his body and his senses, and whose self has become the self of all creation is unaffected though he is doing work.

#### NOTES

1 The conquest of the body, the senses, and the mind is thus described by Manu

वाग्दण्डोऽयं मनोदण्डः कायदण्डस्तथैव च ।

यस्यैते नियता दण्डाः स त्रिदण्डीति कथ्यते ॥

2 He is not affected by Karma as he does work only for *Lokasangraha*

3 सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा Sri Sankaracharya says that this refers to the identity of souls; Sri Ramanujacharya says that this refers to the equality of souls (as all souls are equal in jnana, only the material bodies being different); Sri Madhvacharya finds herein the similarity of souls as servants or images of God, though souls are diverse and unequal. This is the only and fundamental difference

between the three schools of thought. They agree in the *Sadhana*s and in Atma being Sachchidananda and immaterial and eternal. The solution of the abovesaid only difference is only by each seeing for himself the fact at the end of the common road. I do not propose to discuss the relative merits and demerits of these diverse and different views. They have been discussed for centuries and they will be discussed for centuries more. The common road is untrod and we only got into lanes and discuss the goal in excited groups. I do not propose to go into that question.

नैव किंचित्करोमीति युक्तो मम्येत तत्त्ववित् ।

पदगम्यत्यन्तपृथग्निमित्तमनाञ्छन्त्यपि स्वतन्त्रः ॥ ८ ॥

मलपम्पित्त्वं न्यूस्तुन्मिषन्निमिषन्नपि ।

इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्त इति धारयन् ॥ ९ ॥

The knower of truth must think with his calm and composed mind that he is not himself engaged in any activity—whether seeing hearing touching, smelling eating, going, sleeping, breathing, speaking, discharging, receiving opening and closing the eyes,—realising that (in these acts) the senses are moving among the sense objects.

## NOTES

1 The Advaita school says that this is because the soul is not an actor but is Sachchidananda. The Dvaita school says that this is because the true doer as God and man must give up his false idea of independent volition.

2 The Lord has summed up in this verse the work of the five *Jnanendriyas* and the five *Karmendriyas*.

The soul is not the actor and director in respect of either voluntary or involuntary or reflex actions in the body. By mere mental *adhyasa* it has imposed on itself the idea of being a doer in regard to the voluntary actions alone. The true seer will have the same attitude towards voluntary actions as we have towards involuntary and reflex actions.

ब्रह्मण्यादाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।  
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा ॥ १० ॥

He who performs actions, surrendering them unto God and giving up attachment, is untouched and untainted by sin just as a lotus leaf is unaffected by the water.

## NOTES

1. "Brahma" in this stanza is taken by Sri

Sankaracharya and Sri Madhvacharya as meaning God. Sri Ramanujacharya takes it as meaning Prakriti. As everything emanates from Brahman, Prakriti being only the primary emanation or sakti, this process of realising our detachedness and our true nature and realising that the sense-actions are really not a portion of our very Self is the same whether we regard them as the effect of Prakriti (a nearer cause) or as the result of God's *sankalpa* (the ultimate cause).

2. The previous two verses refer to the *Jnana yoga*. This verse refers to the *Karma yoga*.

कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केषैरिन्द्रियैरपि ।

योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति सङ्गं त्यक्त्वात्मशुद्धये ॥ ११ ॥

The (karma) yogins perform action—renouncing attachment and for the sake of mental purity—with their body and mind and senses which are freed from the sense of possession and pleasure and full of the sense of surrender of all fruits to God.

#### NOTES.

1. The word केषः has been explained above by a long phrase to bring out its full force as pointed out by Sri Sankaracharya.

2 The purified mind, as pointed out in the Bhashyotkarsha Deepika, will rejoice in meditation and selfless aid to others. The purified ears will rejoice in hearing about His love and His blessed actions for the good of humanity. The purified tongue will take what had been offered in His worship. The purified nose will rejoice in the smell of flowers placed in worship at His lotus feet. The purified skin will rejoice in His divinest streams. The purified feet will seek His shrines. The purified hands will worship Him. The purified tongue will utter in gladness His praise and sing His glory.

3 Such holy actions bless not only the doer but also those who follow or applaud them or merely report them or look on them.

धर्मः श्रुतो वा दृष्टो वा कथितो वा कृतोऽपि वा ।

अनुमोदेतो वा राजेन्द्र पुनाति पुरुषं सदा ॥

(Mahabharata Asvamedha parva, chapter 94 verse 29)

युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम् ।

अयुक्तः कामकारेण फले सक्तो निबध्यते ॥ १२ ॥

The dedicator of fruits of actions to God by giving up such fruits attains the peace born of such steadfastness (of karma yoga). The man



of unpoised mind is bound, because of its acting under desire and of its attachment to fruits

### NOTES

1 The diversity of results of actions is due to the diversity of mental attitudes.

2. Sri Ramanujacharya takes the goal indicated by these verses to be the realisation of Jiva. According to him, as pointed out already the Gita leaves the soul at the end of the VIth chapter in a state of the realisation of the self attained by Karma yoga and Jnana yoga and then teaches the fitted soul the bliss of Bhakti yoga

अयकर्मणि मनसा सन्यस्यास्ते सुखं यशी ।

नयद्राद पुर देही नय कुषत्र फारयन् ॥ १३ ॥

Renouncing mentally all actions, the man of controlled senses dwells, neither doing nor directing action—in the city of the nine gates.

### NOTES

1 The city of the nine gates is the body which has nine openings. Neelakanta says that the nine gates are the five *Jnanendriyas*, *Prana*, *Buddhi*, *Ahankara*, and *Chitta*

2. Sri Bankaracharya says that after pointing out that to one who has not attained perfect mental

self-poise and purity the path of Karma Yoga is far better than the path of premature Karma Sannyasa (Vividisha Sannyasa), the Lord declares here that the man of attained self-poise and purity will be a *Jnananishtha* and rooted in *Vidvat Sannyasa*.

3 The other schools especially the Dvaita school say that what is taught is not the renunciation of action but the renunciation of passion.

4 सर्वकर्माणि means all actions including Nitya, Naimittika, Kamya, and *Pratishuddha*

5 Sri Ramanujacharya says well. आत्मन प्राचीनकर्ममूलदेहसबन्धप्रयुक्तमिदं कर्मणा कर्तृत्वं न स्वरूपप्रयुक्तम् ।

न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः ।

न कर्मफलसंयोगे स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥ २३ ॥

The Lord does not, in the case of beings, create doership or action or union with the fruit of action. This is done by Svabhava

### NOTES ·

1. Sri Ramanujacharya takes प्रभु as meaning *na*—consistently with his interpretation of Chapter I to VI as pointed out already

2. *svabhava*. This is a word about which controversy has raged Sri Sankaracharya takes it to mean Avidya or Maya or Prakriti Sri Rama-

nijacharya takes it to mean as the sum total of  
 1. *अज्ञानम्* Sri Madhvacharya takes it to mean God.

नास्ते कश्चापि पाप न येन मुक्त विभुः ।

महाननामृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यति जन्तवः ॥ १५ ॥

The Lord doth not accept the good or the  
 evil deeds of any person. Knowledge is veiled by  
 ignorance and hence the mortals are deluded by  
 ignorance.

### Notes

1. The Lord is *atapa amaitalam* (perfection  
 of bliss) and cannot be affected by the actions of  
 created beings. These actions are in proportion to  
 the predominance of ignorance or vision.

2. Sri Ramanujacharya takes *मम* to mean jiva.  
 Then the verse would mean that the jiva is in all  
 bodies but is unaffected by good or bad actions  
 which are proportioned to the mental states. He  
 takes *अमृतम्* to mean Vasanas.

3. *जन्तवः* So called as they are *जन्मधीनः* (given to  
 successive births)

ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं यथा नाशितमात्मनः ।

तेषामादित्ययज्ज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम् ॥ १६ ॥

But in the case of those in whom such ig-

norance has been destroyed by jnana (knowledge) their knowledge, like the Sun, reveals the Supreme.

### NOTES .

1 The word "Atmanah" is in the singular number. It cannot be made the foundation for a discussion about the soul being one or many. But somehow that discussion is dragged in by some commentators Sri Madhvacharya takes "Atmanah" to mean God and to relate to ज्ञान So according to him आत्मनः ज्ञानेन could be by the knowledge of God.

2 Another discussion is about *avidya* being आवरूप (positive) or अभावरूप (negative)

3 Another discussion is whether jnana itself gives salvation or whether grace is necessary In fact, even jnana is due to grace. He who is able to say that the final factor is only this or that or something else would indeed be a bold man In my view these discussions do not really arise under this verse, though they may arise elsewhere

तद्बुद्धयस्तदात्मानस्तन्निष्ठास्तत्परायणाः ।

गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृत्तिं ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः ॥ १७ ॥

Those whose minds have reached the supreme knowledge, whose self is the Supreme,

who are rooted in the Supreme, and to whom the Supreme is the highest attainment—they go to the abode whence there is no return, their sins having been destroyed by *mana* (wisdom or realisation)

## NOTES

1 Between *śravana* (study) and *śakṣhāt-kara* (realisation) we have the indispensable and vital steps—*manana* and *vidhīḥyaṣana* (concentrated thought and meditation)

2 The four words *वृक्षाय* etc., mean four different and successive stages of attainment.

3 Sri R. manuja consistently with his exposition of Chapters I to VI says that this verse describes the realisation of the nature of the soul (as different from the Over-soul)

विद्याधिनयसपन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।

मुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥ १८ ॥

The knowers of the Self look with an equal eye on a Brahmana endowed with wisdom and tranquillity, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a *chandala*.

## NOTES

1. The above instances are given as illustrations of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.

2 Sri Desikar says that *Vidya* *mnaya* *sampanna* does not qualify *Brahmana* but refers to a separate group while *Brahmana* refers to one who is a Brahmin by birth

3. The main idea is that the man of realisation beholds God in all

4 Sri Ramanuja says that diversity is in prakriti but not in the souls which have *samya* (likeness)

इहैव तैर्जित सर्गो येषां साध्ये स्थितं मनः ।

निर्दोषं हि सम ब्रह्म तस्माद्ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः ॥ १९ ॥

Even here is *samsara* (the cycle of births and deaths) overthrown by those whose minds are rooted in this sameness. Brahman is without any imperfection and is the same in all. Therefore they rest in Brahman.

### NOTES

1. God is the all and the All-in-All.

2. His Love sustains and pervades and controls everything.

3 He is untouched by the imperfections of the manifested phenomena. The Sruti says.

सूर्यो यथा सर्वलोकस्य चक्षुर्न लिप्यते चाक्षुषैर्बाह्यदोषैः ।

एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा न लिप्यते लोकदुःखेन बाह्य. ॥

(Just as the sun who is the eye of the universe is untainted by outside imperfections even so is the universal Soul untainted by the griefs of the world)

4 The rule in Gautama Smṛiti "समा समन्वयं विदमसमे पूजात," which condemns equal reverence to the unequal and unequal reverence to the equal has no application to the seer of attained God realisation who sees God in all

न प्रहृष्येतिप्रय प्राप्य नोद्विजेत्प्राप्य चाप्रियम् ।  
स्थिरबुद्धिरसमूढो प्रहृषयिष्यहृष्यणि स्थितः ॥ २० ॥

He whose mind is firm, who is without delusion, and who knows Brahman and rests in Brahman will not rejoice at attaining what is pleasant or grieve at receiving what is painful

NOTES.

1 The keynote of realisation is in the words *Vireku* and *viragya* (wisdom and dispassion)

याद्व्यस्यैष्यसकात्मा विन्दत्यात्मनि यत्सुखम् ।  
स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षय्यमश्नुते ॥ २१ ॥

He whose mind is not attached to external objects attains the joy of the soul. He, with his mind bound in union with Brahman, enjoys eternal and infinite bliss.

## NOTES

1 Though one has been enjoying pleasures born of sense-contacts during many births yet renunciation will lead to a higher bliss

यच्च कामसुखं लोके यच्च दिव्यं महत्सुखम् ।

तृष्णाजयसमुत्थस्य नाहं तं षोडशीं कलाम् ॥

The man of consummated Viveka and Vairagya attains the joy of the soul which is the joy of the union of the soul and the Oversoul.

3 Neelakanta says that Samadhi is like and unlike sleep like, because we have the bliss of ऐक्य (oneness) in both and unlike, because in the latter *avidya* (nescience) exists and the bliss is hence transient and interrupted while in the former *avidya* is destroyed and the bliss is eternal and perfect

ये हि सस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोगिन्य एव ते ।

आद्यन्तवन्तः कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुधः ॥ २२ ॥

All enjoyments that are contact-born are verily sources of pain. They have further a beginning and an end, O Kaunteya. Therefore the wise man rejoiceth not in them.

## NOTES :

1 The bliss of God-love and God realisation is



eternal and perfect. The pleasures of the senses are brief and imperfect and lead to satiety and pain.

2. In all our pursuits of pleasure we have the pain of acquisition, the pain of conservation, the pain of decay and loss, the inevitable satiety and the certainty that pleasure is bought at somebody else's pain. Further all pleasures have a beginning and an end. As Gaudapadacharya says,

भावावन्ते च यत्रास्ति वतमानस्यैव तत्तथा ।

Such transiency is essential non-existence. Further sense-pleasures often leave a craving which outlives the capacity to acquire or even to enjoy.

3. All pleasures in earth or heaven are only pain to the seeker after the bliss of God-realisation. Just as the eye is so delicate that what seems a gentle touch to the body is a rough and painful thing to it, even so the God-lover who is the eye of the universe finds even the touch of sense-pleasures in heaven an agonising pain.

4. The Yoga Bhishiyakam here says well

वदस्य दूषानुविद्येतेन च तनयापराभिनिरापातुमव ॥

5. I may refer here to the wonderful Yoga sutras which have analysed the sources of sorrow—

अविद्यासिता रागादूषामिनिवद्याः पञ्चद्वयाः ।

अविद्यायेप्रमुक्तरेषां प्रमुक्तानुविद्धिभोवाराणाम् ॥

6. The Vishnu Purana says well

यावतः कुरुते जन्तुः संवन्धान्मनस प्रियान् ।

तावन्तोऽस्य निखन्यन्ते हृदये शोकशङ्खवः ॥

शक्नोतीहैव यः सोढुं प्राक् शरीरविमोक्षणात् ।

कामक्रोधोद्भवं वेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः ॥ २३ ॥

That man who, even before his liberation from the body, can withstand and endure here on earth the force of lust and anger, is the man of *yoga*, the man of happiness.

### NOTES

1. This self-control is due to a perception of the nature of the soul and the nature of the non-soul and leads to self-realisation.

2 Human life on earth is the place to learn this power of self-control which leads to the bliss of self-realisation.

3. The Yoga Vasishtha says well:

प्राणे गते यथा देहः सुखदुःखं न विन्दति ।

तथा चेत्याणयुक्तोऽपि स कैवल्यश्रमे वसेत् ॥

योऽन्तःसुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथान्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।

स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥

The yogi full of inner happiness, inner

amusement, and inner illumination, having attained God, attains the Bliss Divine

### NOTES

1 अक्षभूतः The monistic school treats this as meaning having become one with Brahman Sri Madhva treats it as meaning one who is in Brahma (ब्रह्मणि भूतः)

2 Sri Ramanujacharya consistently with his general interpretation of Chapters I to VI of the Gita says that Brahmanirvana means the joy of realising the jiva (Atmanubhava sukham)

3 The difference between सुख and आराम is well brought out in the following verse in *Narada Purana*.

दधनस्तथासमायासस्तु च जायते नृणाम् ।  
आराम स तु विद्वेयः सुख कामक्षयोदितम् ॥

4. This verse gives us a glimpse into the joy of the self delighted and self illumined yogi

5 The Yoga V vishta says well

न केचन जयन्त्यस्यत्यस्य रक्षयन्त्यमी ।  
नामर नागरीकान्त कुप्यामकसना इव ॥

कमन्ते प्रह्वनिर्वाणभृषय क्षीणकल्मषा ।

विज्रद्वैधा यतात्मानाः सर्वभूतहिते रता ॥ २५ ॥

The sages, with sins destroyed, with doubts dispelled, with senses controlled and with love for the good of all creatures attain the Bliss Divine.

### NOTES

1 The Self is the Self of All and is the object of supreme love and affection and adoration. The love of the men of right vision and renunciation flows out to all beings as they see the innermost unity of the Self of all. “तदेतत्प्रेयः पुत्रात्प्रेयो वित्तात्प्रेयो-  
ऽन्यस्मात्सर्वस्मादन्तरतर यदयमात्मा ” says the Sruti

2. Madhusoodana says that the sages attain freedom from sin by means of यज्ञ etc., ability to realise the soul by means of purity of mind, victory over doubt by *Sravaṇa* and *Manana* (hearing and thinking), steadfastness by *Nididhyasana*, (meditation) and love of all by God-realisation

कामक्रोधवियुक्तानां यतीनां यतचेतसाम् ।

अमितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम् ॥ २६ ॥

The Bliss Divine, both here and hereafter, is to those who are released from lust and anger, to the men of renunciation, to the men of controlled minds and to the men of realised Atman

### NOTES:

1 अमितः is interpreted by Sri Sankaracharya as-

meaning here and hereafter to show that a man may attain *Jivanmukti* even here अतएव यत्रतुत The other schools deny this. Sri Madhvacharya explains it as meaning always and everywhere and says that a man of realisation can see God everywhere and at all times

एवमन्तर्या यदियं ह्यस्मिन्नुपैयान्तरे भूयो ।  
प्राप्तापानी समौ कृत्वा नासान्यन्तरचारिणौ ॥२७॥

यतेन्द्रियमनो बुद्धिर्मुनिर्मोक्षपरायण ।  
विगतैश्छायायुक्तो यः सदा मुक्त एव स ॥२८॥

Shutting out all external contacts, with his gaze fixed between the eyebrows, making the outgoing and ingoing breaths equal and moving within the nostrils, with senses, mind and bud dhi under control, with liberation as his supreme goal, freed from desire and fear and anger,—such a man of meditation is verily free for ever

### NOTES

1 These two verses form the kernel (सूत्रस्थानीय) of Chapter VI

2 Vivoka Vairagya, and Dhyana lead to Moksha

भोकारं यस्तपसां सर्वलोकमहेश्वरम् ।

सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति ॥२९॥

Having known Me who am the Enjoyer of all sacrifices and austerities, who am the Supreme Ruler of all the worlds, who am the Loving Friend of all beings, he attains peace.

### NOTES

1 Sri Ramanujacharya says that the sage will do karmayoga as भगवदाराधन । सुहृद आराधनाय हि सर्वे प्रयतन्ते ।

2 I cannot better conclude my notes on this chapter than by quoting the magnificent description of Bhagavan by Sri Sankaracharya in his Bhashya on this verse

भोकारं यज्ञानां तपसां च कर्तृरूपेण देवतारूपेण च सर्वलोकमहेश्वरं सर्वेषां लोकानां महान्तर्मीश्वरं सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां सर्वप्राणिनां प्रत्युपकारनिरपेक्षतयोपकारिणं सर्वभूतानां हृदयेश्वरं सर्वकर्मफलाप्यक्षं सर्वत्रैत्ययसाक्षिणं मां नारायणं ज्ञात्वा शान्तिं सर्वसंसारोपरतिमृच्छति प्राप्नोतीति ।

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

1 As already stated by me at the beginning of this Chapter, this Chapter deals with Karma-sannyasayoga

2. It is well summed up thus in Sri Yamuna charya's Gītarthīngaraḥa

कर्मयोगस्य श्रीकृष्णं यैत्रयं कायनं तद्विधाः ।

सद्गुणनन्दकारथं एवमाख्याय उच्यते ॥

The Lord teaches in this Chapter that wonderful secret of dispassion and renunciation by which the ultimate bliss of wisdom and God realization is reached. He asks us to give up the foolish notion that the path of selfless work is different from that of self renounced action. Both if resolutely pursued lead to the same result. But the former is easier than the latter. The goal is the bliss of god love and God realization. As the last verse in the Chapter says:

भोक्ता यद्वत्पथां यवत्येकमद्वयम् ।

गुह्यं बहुभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मी घातिगृच्छति ॥

Thus ends the Chapter

KARMA SANYASA YOGA.

## CHAPTER VI.

### Atmasamyama Yoga.

#### PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

1. This Chapter is called the आत्मसंयमयोगाध्यायः. It deals primarily with Rajayoga culminating in Dhyana, Dharana, and Samadhi.

2 The 5th Chapter has shown to us that the path of Karma Yoga is easier than the too-early adopted path of *Vividisha Sannyasa*. This Chapter gives us the luminous means by which the self-realisation towards which we strive by means of the discipline of work (Karma Yoga) can be perfected. Without the help of *Yoga*, we cannot attain a realisation of the true being of soul and God. Without it we cannot attain the highest bliss of Bhakti or Jnana. Without it the bhakti that we have is but a shadow of the Para bhakti. Without it the jnana that we attain is but a shadow of the supreme jnana. The Yoga Chudamanyupanishad says

यत्समाधौ परं व्योतिरनन्तं विश्वतोमुखम् ।

तस्मिन्दृष्टे क्रियाकर्म यातायातो न विद्यते ॥



3 Sri Sankaracharya points out in his introduction that this chapter is an exposition of the sutra like verse No 27 in Chapter V (सर्वज्ञा-युक्ता-परिपूर्ण-ज्ञान) and that the Lord teaches us that Karma is the *Bahiranga* (outer instrument) of Dhyana Yoga and finds its fulfilment in Dhyana.

4. Sri Ramanujacharya says, pursuing his own line of thought, that Karma Yoga and Jnana Yoga, perfected by Raja Yoga leads to the realisation of the Atman. Such Atman so freed from Gunasanga (samarctic state) has an inevitable and irresistible and eternal flow of love towards God (Bhakti) which is the means by which there comes an inevitable and irresistible and eternal flow from God of Grace and Bliss which is Moksha.

5 Sri Madhvacharya says that in this chapter we are taught the Samadhi Yoga which is the innermost and most efficient means of Yoga. ज्ञाना-संरक्ष-समाधियो माहात्मेनाभ्यासेन

6 Thus the net result of all these teachings and expositions is that the practice of Raja Yoga with all eight angas is the means by which the seed of Karma Yoga becomes transformed into the celestial blossom of Bhakti Yoga and the ambrosial fruit of paradise of Jnana Yoga.

## श्रीभगवानुवाच

अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।

स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर्न चाक्रियः ॥

The Lord said

He who performs his bounden duty without desiring the fruit of action he is the true renouncer of action and the true doer of action, not he who has given up the fire (in which Srauta Karma has to be performed) and the rites (which have to be performed according to the Smritis).

## NOTES

1 Sri Sankaracharya points out that this stanza really implies that a Karmayogin has to perform Karma Yoga till by purity of mind he attains Dhyana Yoga

2. If a man gives up his Vedic rites, tapas, dana etc , and poses as a jnani, that by itself cannot make him a true sannyasin. What is required is renunciation of desire. It is not proper that a man should consciously and prematurely renounce action. But when the fulfilled renunciation of desire is complete, renunciation of action will come in the form of Dhyana Yoga and Jnana Yoga. Then freed from Gunasanga (attachment to gunas) the soul rests in its own glory.

3 Another exposition is that we must not regard him as a *sannyasi* (ascetic) who has given up his *rites* or him as a *yogi* who is motionless and who does nothing. The true ascetic and yogin is he who does his duty free from desire.

1. According to the Advaita school *Karma* yoga leads to *chitta suddhi*. Only then *sravana*, *manana* and *nididhyasana* bear fruit. *Vaidhyasana* (which is really *Dhyana* yoga) leads to *jnana* and *sakshatkara* (realisation). Sri Ramanujacharya says that a *Karma* yogin who does work free from desire has really both *Karma* yoga and *Jnana* yoga, the combination of which leads to *Atmaralokana* (realisation of the soul) and that hence *Karma* yoga is better than mere renunciation by *Jnana* yoga. Difference of terminology apart, I am of opinion that the main idea of all the schools is that perfected *Karma* yoga leads to perfected *Dhyana* yoga which leads to bliss.

७ Sankarananda says well about this verse

भवा मुमुक्षुस्त्वैवेदिकं कर्म नियमनं धृष्ट्या चेश्वरभक्त्या च  
कृतम्यमिति सूचयितुं कर्मयोगिनं तदीयकर्मणाम् न ह्यनु धीमन्वाप्तुं  
शक्यम् ।

य सन्यासमिति प्रादुर्योग तं विधिं पापहृत् ।

न ह्यसन्यस्तसंकल्पो योगी भवति कश्चन ॥ २ ॥

What has been called as *sannyasa* know O

Pandava, yoga to be that (true Sannyasa), because no one who has not renounced desire becomes a yogi.

### NOTES

1 The innermost element of Sannyasa unagitatedness by desire is present in Karma yoga in the form of unagitatedness of desire of fruit of action

2. Sri Sankaracharya explains *sankalpa* as—  
फलविषयसंकल्पोऽभिसाधि. फलसंकल्पस्य चित्तविक्षेपहेतुत्वात् ।

3. “नि संकल्पतटस्थस्तिष्ठेदेतन्मोक्षलक्षणम्” says Maitya-  
yanyopanishad.

4 Sri Madhusoodana says well

योगं फलतृष्णाकर्तृत्वाभिमानयोः परित्यागेन विहितकर्मानुष्ठानं  
तं संन्यास विद्धि ।

5 Sri Ramanujacharya takes संकल्प to mean the ignorance which thinks *anatma* to be *atma*.  
आत्मयाथात्म्यानुसंधानेन अनात्मनि प्रकृतावात्मसंस्कल्पः संन्यस्तः परि-  
त्यक्तो येन सः संन्यस्तसंकल्पः ।

6. Sri Madhvacharya says well

कामसंकल्पाद्यपरित्यागे कथमुपायवान्स्यादित्याशयः ।

आरुरुक्षोर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते ।

योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते ॥ ३ ॥

To the sage desirous of climbing up unto Dhyana yoga, action is said to be the means. To the very same man who has attained such Dhyana yoga, renunciation of action is the cause (of perfected Dhyana yoga)

### NOTES

1. Though a lot of controversy has been raised about the view of Sri Sankaracharya on this verse it is more based on imaginary data than on real data. His meaning is that when the discipline of desireless duty has borne the fruit of Dhyana yoga such Dhyana uninterrupted by action is the best means of perfecting such Dhyana yoga. He says वाचपातकमस्य उपरमते वायतामभिरावाप्तस्य त्रितन्त्रियस्य चित्त समधीयत, तथा सति च सति यो गच्छति भवति

He quotes the following great verse from Vyasa

नेतादृष्टं भाग्यमस्मास्ति चित्त  
 यदेकता समता सुखता च ।  
 धीर्ज्ञः स्थितिर्दण्डनिधानमार्जवं  
 ततश्चतस्रोपरमा क्रियाम् ॥

2. Sridhara clinches the whole discussion by saying तस्यैव योगास्तस्य योगान्नानुष्ठानं श्रुतस्य विधेपासदस्य योगारोहे कमनी शमः सन्धास्य कारणमुच्यते । न हि कममु आश्रितो व नन्यचिन्तया योगमनुष्ठानुमीष्टे ।

3 Such yearning for Dhyana-yoga undisturbed by any other thought or word or action and yearning for fulfilment through uninterrupted development can come only to a few highly evolved souls whose discipline by Karma yoga has been perfected. They will go on rooted more and more in *Dhyana*. During the intervals between dhyana they will do duty for *Lokasangraha* but their increasing tendency will be towards increasingly prolonged *dhyana*.

4 As Nilakantha says well that just as a very hungry man gives up all action to satisfy his hunger, even so does the man hungry for divine union give up all action for that supreme attainment. यथा तीव्रबुभुक्षयोपेतोऽन्यत्र नीरागो व्यासज्ञान्तर त्यक्त्वा भोजनारुढ एव भवति तथा तीव्रावस्थावान् सर्वत्र वीतरागस्त्यक्तसर्वकर्मा योगारूढ एव भवति ।

5 Sri Ramanujacharya says यावदात्मावलोकनरूपमोक्षावाप्तिकर्मकार्यमित्यर्थः ।

6. Sri Madhvacharya has given us very beautiful and uplifting ideas on this verse. He says that योगमारुक्षोः means उपायसंपूर्तिभिच्छोः, and योगारूढस्य means संपूर्णोपायस्य and अपरोक्षज्ञानिनः कारणं means परम-सुखकारण तस्य सर्वोपशमेन समाधिरेव कारणं प्राधान्येन. He then says: तथापि यदा भोक्तव्योपरमस्तदैव सम्यगसंज्ञातसमाधिर्जायते ।

भूम्यदा तु भ । वरितादी स्थितिः । He quotes the following five stanzas.

ये त्वां पश्यन्ति भगवत्स्य दृष्टं मुच्यन्ते परम् ।  
 तथामयं तु सम्यक् स एवाभिजायत नृणाम् ॥  
 भाक्त्यर्थकमवधीनं ज्ञेयं कथयापि वा ।  
 वतवन्ति महामानसत्वं चास्वत्परायणम् ॥

7 Hence कथयाग leads to ध्यानयोग, and ध्यानयोग coupled with कथयन्त्याग leads to the perfection of ध्यानयोग. It is only on this interpretation that we can explain the doubt of Arjuna and the Lord's solution as to the वागधट्ट at the end of this chapter. Arjuna asks what becomes of the man who has been a striver in the path of such Dhyana yoga and who does not attain the fulfilment in this life and dies before such fulfilment.

8. Sankarananda quotes also the beautiful verse.

नैव धर्मा न आधर्मा न वैव हि शुभाशुभी ।  
 यः स्वादेकाग्रने चीनस्तूष्णीं किञ्चिदपि न संयतम् ॥  
 यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मस्यनुपज्यते ।  
 सद्यसकल्पसन्ध्यासी योगाकृष्टस्तदोच्यते ॥ ४ ॥

Verily, when a man is not attached to the sense objects or to actions and is habituated to

the renunciation of all egotistic volitions, he is then said to be a man of accomplished ascent in Yoga.

### NOTES

1. Thus this requires the perfection of Nishkama Karma and renunciation of desire and the root of desire (Sankalpa).

2 Kama leads to Karma and Karma leads to Samsara स यथाकामो भवति तत्कुरुर्भवति यत्कुरुर्भवति तत्कर्म कुरुते (Srutu); यथाद्वे कुरुते कर्म तत्तत्कामस्य चेष्टितम् (Manu Smriti).

संकल्पमूलाः कामा वै यज्ञा संकल्पसमवा ।

कामं जानामि ते मूल संकल्पात्किल जायसे ।

न त्वा संकल्पयिष्यामि समूलो विनाशिष्यसि ॥

3. Sri Ramanujacharya says well कर्मयोग एव योगनिष्पत्तिकारणम् । अतो विषयाननुपङ्गाभ्यासरूप कर्मयोगमेवावश्यकुः कुर्यात् ।

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥ ५ ॥

A man should uplift himself by his own self. He should not degrade himself, for his self is his self's friend and his self is his self's enemy.



## NOTES

1 The controversy as to whether the meaning is that the mind (Atma) should be used to uplift the self or that God (Atma) should be used for that purpose is fought out often but is not of much use. The mind is the instrument of uplift. God is the aid the soul is the maker of the effort. As the Atma is self effulgent and as *avidya* is an immemorial veil which can be torn asunder the Atman who is the putter on of the veil can put it asunder. Thus from the point of view of the effort, the instrument (the mind) gains prominence and from the point of view of the Jiva God gains prominence.

बधुत्तरमात्मनस्तस्य येनारमैयात्मना जित ।  
अनारमनस्तु यदुत्थे यदेतारमैव शत्रुवत् ॥ ६ ॥

The self is the friend of the self for him who has conquered his body and his senses through the self. So far as the enmity of the unconquered mind and senses to the self is concerned, the self itself acts as the enemy of such self.

## NOTES.

1 This cryptic passage expands the idea contained in the previous stanza. The self-obscured self is the hindrance to the glory of its effulgence.

the self-released self is the helper of the glory of its effulgence.

2 Put briefly the verse means that the *jitendriya* (the man of conquered senses) attains self-realisation while the *ajitendriya* (the man of unconquered senses) does not

3. A famous stanza says well

मन एव मनुष्याणां क्लृप्तं बन्धमोक्षयोः ।  
बन्धाय विषयासक्त मुक्त्यै निर्विषयं स्मृतम् ॥

4. Another famous stanza says

वाचं यच्छ मनो यच्छ यच्छ प्राणेन्द्रियाणि च ।  
आत्मानमात्मना यच्छ न भूयः कल्पसेध्वनः ॥

जितोत्तमः प्रशान्तश्च परमात्मा समाहितः ।  
शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः ॥ ७ ॥

To him who, amidst cold and heat and pleasure and pain and praise and blame, is self-controlled and serene, the Supreme Self becomes a realisation

### NOTES.

1 परमात्मा समाहितः is split up by Sri Desikar as आत्मा परं समाहितः. He and Sri Ramanujacharya take Atma here as Jivatma. As already stated above by me, according to them Chapters 1 to VI take us

only to the realisation of Atma while Chapter VII and succeeding chapters take us to the realisation of God through Bhakti.

2 Sri Sankarananda quotes here the following great Sruti passage:

“महत्सदं ज्ञात्वा यद्यमृतं यद्यत् कुचलोऽवहाय एवाकी समा  
यित्वा आत्मकाम आत्मकामा निष्कामा जीवन्मूला व्याघ्र हस्तिनि सिंह-  
देशे मयके नकुठ सर्पे यद्य यद्यथे गन्धर्वे मृगो रुपाणि विदित्वा न  
विभेति कुतश्चन । यद्य इव तिष्ठासंछिद्यमानो न कुप्येत न कपेत्  
उपत इव तिष्ठासंछिद्यमानो न कुप्येत न कपेत् आकाशमिव तिष्ठासे  
च्छिद्यमानो न कुप्येत न कपेत् सत्यं तिष्ठावत् ।”

ज्ञानयिज्ञानवृत्तात्मा हृदस्यो विजितन्द्रिय ।

युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी समलोकात्मकाश्चन ॥ ८ ॥

He whose mind is filled with satisfaction by knowledge and realisation, who is unshakable, and who is of subdued senses is called the *yukta* (the man of accomplished *yoga*). Such a *yogin* is one to whom a lump of earth, a stone, and gold are the same.

NOTES.

1 Sri Sankaracharya says that हृदस्य means अशक्य (unshakable) Sri Ramanujacharya says that हृद means the Jivatma and that *yoga* leads to the realisation of the Jiva (chit) and that the pure chit

realises *Bhagavan* through *Bhakti*. Sri Madhva-charya says that *कूट* means *Akasa* (ether) and that *कूटस्थ* means *निर्विकार* (unchanging) like the *akasa* (ether)

सुहृन्मित्रार्थुदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु ।  
साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते ॥ ९ ॥

He who has a sameness of mind towards unselfish well-wishers, friends, enemies, neutrals, mediators, hateful men, kinsmen, righteous men, and unrighteous men excels all others.

#### NOTES:

1. Sri Madhvacharya says that all Jivas are *chit* and that the differences are due to the mind. He quotes the following verse

सतः सर्वेऽपि चिद्रूपाः सर्वदोषविवर्जिताः ।  
जीवास्तेषां तु ये दोषास्त उपाधिकृता मताः ॥  
सर्वे चेश्वरतस्तेषां न किञ्चित्सत एव तु ।  
समा एषा ह्यतः सर्वे वैषम्यं भ्रान्तिसमवम् ॥

2. We must remember that this description relates to the *yogarudha*. It does not mean that a man in his *Grihastha* life is to treat the righteous and the unrighteous alike. Indeed Lord Rama has been described as *स्थानक्रोधः प्रहर्ता च* (the man of well-placed anger and the awarder of punishment).

योगी युञ्जीत सततमात्मानं रहसि स्थितः ।

एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरिभ्रष्टः ॥ १० ॥

The yogi should incessantly apply his mind to meditation, remaining, in a secret place by himself, with mind and body controlled, devoid of desire, and free from possessions

### NOTES

1 After describing the योगी, (the man of accomplished yoga) the Lord proceeds to describe yoga and its *angas*.

2. This injunction is especially necessary in the modern age when man is too much with his fellows in work and in play. Social service is good. But it ought not to kill solitary meditation. Service and meditation are the two wings on which the soul rises to God.

3. The *yogasutras* give us a full description of the eight *angas*. The unconcentrated mind is full of *klesas* (afflictions) and *vikshepas* (distractions).

4. Karma yoga is the step to आनययोग. Patanjali's *Yoga sutras* (II-1) says तप साध्याश्चर्यक्रियाभ्यानि क्रियायावः ।

5. *Tapas* requires loneliness. A familiar saying tells us: एकलपो द्विरभ्यासी ।

6 A beautiful stanza says'

एकान्तवासो लघुभोजनादि मौनं निराशा करणावरोधः ।  
मुनेरसौः संयमनं षडेते चित्तप्रसाद जनयन्ति शीघ्रम् ॥

7. It is said also.

एकोऽभिष्टुर्यथोक्तः स्याद्वौ चैव मिथुनं भवेत् ।  
त्रयो ग्रामः समाख्यातः ऊर्ध्वं तु नगरायते ॥

नगरं हि न कर्तव्यं ग्रामो वा मिथुनं तथा ।  
राजवार्ता हि तेषां स्याद्भिक्षावार्ता परस्परम् ॥

शुचौ देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरमासनमात्मनः ।  
नात्युच्छ्रितं नातिनीचं चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरम् ॥ ११ ॥

तत्रैकाग्र मनः कृत्वा यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः ।  
उपविश्यासने युञ्ज्याद्योगमात्मविशुद्धये ॥ १२ ॥

Having established in a pure spot a firm seat of his own, neither too high nor too low, and made of a cloth, a black antelope skin and kusha grass one over the other, having seated himself on that seat, making his mind one-pointed, with the activities of his mind and senses controlled, let him practise *yoga* for the purification of the mind

#### NOTES

1 The need for a quiet and firm and easy seat

for purposes of meditation is thus stated by Bhagavan Patanjali स्थिरबुद्धमासनं भासीनः समवात् ॥

2. The Sruti says.

इत्यते क्षम्या बुद्ध्या सुक्ष्मया सुभ्रवर्धिभिः ।

सम कायशिरोध्रीध धारयन्नचल स्थिर ।

समेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्य दिशश्चानयलोकयन् ॥ १३ ॥

प्रयान्तात्मा दिशतर्नीर्ध्वक्षचारिधते स्थित ।

मनः सयम्य मच्चित्तो युक्त आसीत मत्परः ॥ १४ ॥

Holding the body and head and neck erect and still steady, with his gaze fixed on the point of the nose, without seeing, the various directions, with a tranquil heart, fearless steadfastly rooted in the Brahmacharya vows—let him sit in Yoga, controlling his mind and with mind fixed on Me and having Me as his Supreme goal.

### NOTES.

1 Seeing the point of the nose is to prevent one's having open eyes which distracts our attention and having closed eyes which induces sleep. It is a means of calming the mind and meditating on God. The purpose is thus tersely stated by Sri Madhusoodana अयद्विषयराहित्याय ।

2. Two beautiful stanzas well bring out the allies and the enemies of *yoga*.

उत्साहान्निव्याद्धैर्यात्तत्त्वज्ञानात्मदर्शनात् ।

जनसंगपरित्यागात्सद्भिर्योगः प्रसिध्यति ॥

अत्याहारात्प्रवासाच्च प्रजल्पाभियमाग्रहात् ।

जनसंगाच्च लौल्याच्च षड्भिर्योगो विनश्यति ॥

3 एकप्रता (concentration) is essential. Bhagavan Patanjali says that the five states of mind are: क्षिप्त, मूढ, विक्षिप्त, एकप्र, निरुद्ध ।

4. He is the Beloved of the soul and the object of Dhyana Yoga is to meditate on Him so as to attain *Samadhi Yoga* which is union with Him. The *Sruti* says तदेतत्प्रेयः पुत्रात्प्रेयो वित्तात्प्रेयोऽन्यस्मात्सर्वस्मादन्तरतरो यदयमात्मा ।

युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी निश्चतमानसः ।

शान्तिं निर्वाणपरमां मत्संस्थामधिगच्छति ॥ १५ ॥

Thus keeping the mind always steadfast the yogi of subdued mind attains the peace which culminates in Moksha (liberation) and which is n My gift.

#### NOTES

1 Such a Yogī is one of attained peace and bliss and liberation and realisation.



प्रज्ञाभावाद्मांसं जघोष्य चोपतो जनान् ।  
भूमिद्वानिव शैलस्य स्याद्वाष्पादुपत्यति च

2. It has been well said

आममनाऽनुमानेन ध्यानाभ्यासरसेन च ।  
त्रिधा प्रकृत्ययप्रज्ञो ज्ञमत यापमुत्तमम् ॥

3 Sri Madhvacharya interprets निर्वाणपरमा as शरीरलागोत्तरावस्था (attained after the casting off of the body) His school does not admit जीव-मुक्ति ।

नात्यभतस्तु योगोऽस्ति न चेकान्तमनसस ।  
न चातिस्वमशीलस्य जाग्रतो नैव चाजुन ॥ १६ ॥  
युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।  
युक्तस्वभाषणोपमस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥ १७ ॥

Yoga is not for him who eateth too much, nor for him who eats too little, nor for him who sleeps too much, nor for him who wakes too much, O Arjuna!

Yoga, which is the conqueror of misery, is for him who is temperate in eating and recreation, who is of regulated conduct in his actions, and who is of regulated sleep and wakefulness.

#### NOTES.

1 The proportions of food and drink are thus stated in a well known stanza.

अर्धमशनस्य सव्यजनस्य तृतीयमुदकस्य तु ।

वायोः संचरणार्थं तु चतुर्थमवशेषयेत् ॥

2. The Satapatha Sruti says

यदुह वा आत्मसंमितमत्र तदवति तत्र दिनस्ति यद्भूयो दिनस्ति  
तथत्कनीयो न भवति ॥

नाध्मातः क्षुधितः श्रान्तो न च व्याकुलचेतनः ।

युजीत योग राजेन्द्र योगी सिद्ध्यर्थमात्मनः ॥

नातिशीते न चैवोष्णे न द्वन्द्वेनानिलान्विते ।

कालेष्वेतेषु युजीत न योगं ध्यानतत्परः ॥

(Markandeya Purana.)

निश्राशनभयश्वासचेष्टातन्त्रादिवर्जनम् ।

कृत्वा निमीलिताक्षसु शक्तो ध्यायन्प्रसिध्यति ॥

(Naradaya)

4. The value of early rising in the Brahma Muhurta (one hour and a half before sunrise) is thus stated.

रात्रेर्भागत्रय कृत्वा प्रबुद्धः प्रथमान्तयोः ।

प्रसूयन्मध्यमे भागे योगयोग्यः प्रजायते ॥

यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते ।

निःस्पृहः सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा ॥ १८ ॥

When the well-controlled mind rests serenely in the Self alone, free from longing after all desires, then is he said to be a man of yoga.

## NOTES

1 Nilakantha says that this and the five succeeding verses describe the man of attained *Ishta*. They describe *asamprajnata samadhi*.

2 आत्मनि Sri Madhvacharya interprets this as meaning God.

3 Vairagya is the अन्तरङ्गयोगसाधन. It is of two kinds—अपर and पर. The former is of 4 varieties.—वृत्तमान, व्यतिरेक, एकद्वय and वृत्ताकार viz. attempt at discrimination of eternal things from non-eternal things, separation of eternal values, self-controlled state of mind and absence of desires. पर वराग्य is the negation of all desires अक्षयप्रपञ्चव्यवहारितुं व्यरूपम् ।

यथा दीपो निपातस्यो न क्षते सोपमा स्मृता ।  
योगिनो यतचित्तस्य युज्यतो योगमारमन् ॥ १९ ॥

Just as a flame in a windless place flickereth not, even such is deemed the simile of the Yogi of controlled mind practising concentration in the self.

## NOTES.

1 Sri Madhvacharya pursues here his own idea in his commentary on the previous verse. He says that आत्मनो योग means भवद्विषय योगम् ।

2 In connection with this stanza we may well refer to the beautiful stanza in Kalidasa's *Kumarasambhava* describing Siva's Yoga.

अवृष्टिसंरम्भमिवाम्बुवाहमपामिवाधारमनुतरजम् ।

अन्तश्चराणां भरतां निरोधान्निवातनिष्कम्पमिव प्रदीपम् ॥

(Like the cloud unladen with the excitements of rain, like the ocean of stilled waves and billows, and like the steady flame in a windless place, owing to the control of the moving breath)

यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योगसेवया ।

यत्र चैवात्मनात्मानं पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति ॥ २० ॥

सुखमात्यन्तिकं यत्तद्बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीन्द्रियम् ।

वेत्ति यत्र न चैवायं स्थितश्चलति तत्त्वतः ॥ २१ ॥

यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं ततः ।

यस्मिन्स्थितो न दुःखेन गुरुणापि विचार्यते ॥ २२ ॥

तं विद्याद्बुद्धसंयोगवियोगं योगसंश्रितम् ।

स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विण्णचेतसा ॥ २३ ॥

That in which the mind finds rest tranquilised by the practice of yoga, that in which he, realising the Supreme through the pure mind, rejoices in the self, that in which he realises the boundless bliss which the poised mind can grasp

and which is beyond the reach of the senses, and being established in which truth he does not swerve therefrom, having attained which he feels that there is no greater gain beyond it, being established in which he is not shaken even by heavy sorrow,—know *that* as described by the term yoga which is a disconnection from all union with pain. Such Yoga should be practised with persevering effect and with an undepressed mind.

## NOTES.

1. This *yogic bliss* is different from the joy of deep sleep, because there we have *vidya* while here we have *avidya*. Gaudapadacharya says:—

“जीवतु मुमुक्षां तमिहैव न जीवते

2. The *yogic bliss* has thus been well described.

समाधिनिभूतमव्ययं चेतसो

निवेशितश्चात्मनि युत्सुर्न भवेत् ।

न शक्यते वर्धयितुं मिरा तदा

समं तदन्तःकरणेन गृह्यते ॥

अस्य शान्तं च निर्वाणमकर्म्यं मुक्तमुत्तमम् ।

3. The last qualification laid down is a stout heart. Let us never quail before the great task and the great call. Gaudapadacharya describes this trait thus very well.

उत्सेक उदधेर्यद्वत्कृशाप्रेणैकविन्दुना ।

मनसो निप्रहस्तद्वद्भवेदपरिखेदतः ॥

4. Sri Madhvacharya pursues his interpretation already referred to thus in his *bhashya* on the 20th stanza आत्मना मनसा । आत्मनि देहे । आत्मानं भगवन्त पश्यन् ।

5. Sri Madhvacharya interprets तत्त्वं as meaning भगवद्गूपात् (from God).

6 दुःखसंयोगवियोगं This means not only destruction of a pain born but also the prevention of the birth of pain.

7. In the Maitrayana Sruti it is said

षड्भिर्मासैस्तु युक्तस्य नित्ययुक्तस्य देहिनः ।

आनन्दः परमो बुद्धः सम्यग्योगः प्रवर्तते ॥

8. In the Mahabharata it has been said well:

न त्वसौ चक्षुषा ग्राह्यो न च सर्वैरपीन्द्रियैः ।

मनसैव प्रदीपेन महानात्मा प्रदृश्यते ॥

सर्वतः पाणिपादान्तः सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखः ।

सर्वतः श्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥

आत्मानमालोकयति मनसा प्रहसन्निव ।

तदैवमाश्रयं कृत्वा मोक्षं याति ततो मयि ।

षण्मासान्नित्ययुक्तस्य योगः पार्थः प्रवर्तते ॥

(Mahabharata, Asvamedha Anugeeta Chapter)

सर्वद्वेषप्रभवा कामास्त्यक्त्वा सवानशेषतः ।

मनसवद्भिः प्रभाम विनियम्य समन्ततः ॥ २४ ॥

शरी शरीरपरमद्वुष्या भुतिगृहीतया ।

आत्मसंस्थ मनः कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ॥

Abandonning in their entirety all desires born of egotistical volitions, and completely restraining by the mind the entire group of the senses from their objects in all directions, let him by slow degrees attain tranquillity through his faculty of discrimination upheld by firm resolve and by making the mind abide in the Self. Let him not think of anything (else).

### NOTES

1 Thus meditation involves the double process of tranquillisation which means the stilling of the waves of desire and concentration which means the realisation of the Atman. It is not the negation of thought but the calming of the sea of the mind to reflect and realise the Infinite Glory. To use the words of Maharshi Patanjali it includes प्रशान्तवृत्ति and आत्मसंस्था.

2 Sri Madhusoodana explains in his luminous commentary this gradual process of tranquillisation

and concentration आत्मसंस्थ refers to संप्रज्ञातसमाधि and न किंचिदपि चिन्तयेत् refers to असंप्रज्ञातसमाधि.

3. The Sruti says.

यच्छेद्वायनर्षी प्राज्ञस्तयच्छेज्ज्ञान आत्मनि ।

नानुध्यायेद्ब्रह्म शब्दान्वाचो विग्लापनं हि तत् ॥

4. In a beautiful stanza this process of elimination, tranquillisation and concentration has been thus well described

आत्मनात्माकारं स्वभावोऽवस्थितं सदा चित्तम् ।

आत्मैकाकारतया तिरस्कृतानात्मदृष्टिं विदधोत ॥

Again-

उपायेन निगृहीयाद्विक्षिप्तं कामभोगयोः ।

सुप्रसन्नं लये चैव यथाकामो लयस्तथा ॥

दुःखं सर्वमनुस्मृत्य कामभोगान्निवर्तयेत् ।

अजं सर्वमनुस्मृत्य जातं नैव तु पश्यति ॥

लये संबोधयेच्चित्तं विक्षिप्तं शमयेत्पुनः ।

स कषायं विजानीयात् समप्राप्तं न चालयेत् ॥

नास्वादयेत्सुखं तत्र निःसंज्ञं प्रज्ञया भवेत् ।

निश्चलं निश्चरचित्तमेकीकुर्यात्प्रयत्नतः ॥

यदा न लीयते चित्तं न च विक्षिप्यते पुनः ।

अनिश्चिनमनाभासं निष्पन्नं ब्रह्म तत्तदा ॥



Again —

यदा वधातस्तस्मै हानानि मनसा च ह ।  
 शुद्धय न नश्यति तामाहुः परमां गतम् ॥  
 तां योगमति मन्वन्तः स्वर्गार्थं स्वधारणम् ।  
 अमृतमश्नुना नश्यति योगो हि प्रनश्यत्यसौ ॥

5 Sri Madhwacharya says well

युद्धाः क्षरन्त्यं मनानिमिह आमरमेष च ।

6 Sri Ramanujacharya shows that desires are of two kinds. (1) those born of sense-contact (स्पर्श्याः) like heat and cold (2) those born of *Sankalpa* like love of wealth etc. The latter can be abandoned the former should be neutralised.

यतो यता निश्चलति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।  
 ततस्ततो नियम्येतदात्मन्येव यत् नयत् ॥ २६ ॥

As often as the wavering and unsteady mind strays away, so often curb it and bring it under the control of the Atman.

प्रज्ञात्तममस्त ह्येन योगिन मुधमुच्यते ।  
 उपैति शान्तरजसं प्रज्ञभूतमकरमयम् ॥ २७ ॥

Verily the supreme bliss comes to that yogi who is of perfectly tranquil mind, whose passion

has been quieted, who has become Brahma, and who is above all taint

युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी विगतकल्मषः ।  
सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते ॥ २८ ॥

The yogi, freed from all taint, constantly practising yoga, enjoys with ease the endless bliss of contact with Brahman.

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।  
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥ २९ ॥

With the mind tranquilised by yoga and realising God in all creation, he beholds the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self

#### NOTES.

1 This and the three succeeding verses clearly refer to certain planes of *realisation* not to a mere philanthropic patronising *sense* of equality or a democratic *assertion* of equality or a philosophic *theory* of equality

2 Sri Sankaracharya says that they refer to ब्रह्मैकत्वदर्शनम् Sri Ramanujacharya says that they refer to the realisation of the Jivatma, which is similar in each being despite variations of body and mind, which is *Anu*, and which is *Sâchchidananda*

Sri Madhvacharya says that they refer to the realisation of God upholding everything as different from and dependant upon Him To quote the very words of the Acharyas

इदानीं योगस्य तत्कलं वक्ष्ये स्ववशानम् ।

सर्वसत्तारविच्छेदकारणं तदप्रदम्बत ॥

(Sri Sankaracharya)

एकस्मिन्नात्मनि दृष्टं त्वस्यात्मनस्तु न कदास्याभ्यासः सममात्मनस्तु  
दृष्टं भवतीत्यथा । ३ (Sri Ramanujacharya)

तच्च परमेश्वरं ब्रह्मनृणां वैश्वदेवादिना साम्येन पश्यति ।

(Sri Madhvacharya)

3 Sri Madhusoodana has started here a fruitless discussion that is likely to drag us away from the main path He says that the path of yoga and the path of jnana are different that Moksha can be attained without yoga and that Sri Sankaracharya has not laid down yoga as a necessary pre-requisite Neelakantha and Dhanapathy attack these views and point out that *Sadhana chatvashraya* includes yoga and that yoga is a necessary pre-requisite Sri Madhusoodana refers to *Yoga Vansiktha*

द्वौ क्रमौ चित्तनाशाय योगो ज्ञानं च राघव ।

योगो वृत्तिनिरासो हि ज्ञानं सम्म ॥५४७॥

असाध्यः कस्यचिद्योगः कस्यचित्त्वानिधयः ।

प्रकारौ द्वौ ततो देवो जगाद परमः शिवः ॥

Nilakantha refers to Daksha .

स्वसंवेद्य हि तद्रूपं कुमारी स्त्रीमुख यया ।

अयोगी नैव जानन्ति जात्यन्धो हि यथा धटम् ॥

4 I do not wish to be drawn into this controversy, for like the controversy about Advaita, Visishtadvaita and Dvaita, the controversy about Karma, Bhakti and Jnana, and other controversies, it will be endless and is further more verbal than real I may, however, point out here the following facts

I How can a permanent sense of the अनृतत्वं (unreality) of the world come except to the man of concentrated mind? The ordinary mind is dispersed among the sense-objects Until it is re-collected and concentrated, a man will repeat parrot-like the declarations of the Advaita but will not realise them.

II As stated already Sâdhanachatushtaya includes *yoga*. Sama, Dama, etc, can never be had without *yoga*

III The *Srutir* आत्मा वा अरे दृश्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः shows that Nididhyasana is a necessary stage between Manana and Darsana

IV If the meaning of *Vasishtha* is that mere *yoga* apart from *jnana* is an independent means of *Moksha* that would be a violent extension of the doctrine of the *Bruti* and the *Gita*. The following *Bruti* passages should be borne in mind

तमेव विदिस्वादिभृत्युमेति नाम्नाः पन्था विद्यतेऽवनान् ।

शान्तो वास्तो उपरतस्तिष्ठतुः समाहितो भूत्वा आत्मन्येवात्मानं पश्येत् ॥

अदाहितो भूत्वा ॥

तत्कारणं सांख्ययोगाभिपन्नं ज्ञात्वा देव मुच्यते सवपाद्ये ॥

तां योगमिति मन्यन्ते स्थिरामिन्द्रियधारणाम् ॥

निधामेतां योगविधिं च क्लृप्तम् ॥

यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्य इति स्थिता ।

अथ मर्षोऽमृता मयस्मिन् ब्रह्म समस्त्यते ॥

V In Sri Bankaracharya's commentary on the *Brahma Sutra* "एतेन योगः प्रत्युक्तः" he attacks only certain assertions of doctrine in the *yoga* philosophy and not the *yoga* methods and realisations

VI. It is hence clear that *yoga* is a vital factor both in *Bhakti* and *Jnana*. The *Bhakti* which merely luxuriates in emotion without the *yogic* self withdrawal and meditation and concentration is likely to make a fetish of emotion and forget the vital elements of devotion. The *Jnana*

which merely luxuriates in the subtleties of metaphysics without yogic self-withdrawal and meditation and concentration is likely to make a fetish of *Vada* (discussion) and forget the vital element of *jnana*. The Gita our perfect scripture shows the ascent of the spiritual life clearly enough. The constant practice of *punya karmas* such as samskâras, service, philanthropy etc., is the discipline that fits us for karma yoga. Some people like Mr Tilak will stand there and will not go beyond. *Karma yoga* has in it elements of yoga and bhakti and jnana but the Nishkâma Karma element is the predominant element. It fits us for Raja yoga which fits us for Bhakti and jnana which lead to Moksha. ज्ञानमुत्पद्यते पुसा क्षयात्पापस्य कर्मणः ।

5 I may quote here one of a series of wonderfully beautiful stanzas in the Svetasvetara Upanishad

निश्चरत स्थाप्य सम शरीरं हृदीन्द्रियाणि मनसा सनिवेश्य ।

ब्रह्मोद्भूतेन प्रतरेत विद्वान् स्रोतांसि सर्वाणि भयावहानि ॥

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वे च मयि पश्यति ।

तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥ ३० ॥

He who sees Me in all things and sees all things in Me, I am never lost to him and he is never lost to me.

## NOTES

1 In the former verse the realisation of the तत्पदार्थ the soul is emphasised. In this verse the realisation of the तत्पदार्थ (God) is emphasised.

2. *Never Lost*—This refers to the fact that there is an absence of even momentary non-realisation of God. The Lord says later on in the Gita श्रान्ती त्वारमेण म मयम् । प्रिया हि श्रान्तिनाऽक्षर्यमह सच्च मम प्रिय ।

3 Sri Ramanujacharya says that मां means मत्साम्य—According to him Chapter VI deals only with the realisation of Jiva which is similar to God.

सर्वभूतस्थित यो मां मजस्येकत्पमास्थित ।

सधेयां धर्तमानोऽपि स यागी मयि धर्तत ॥ ३१ ॥

He who being established in unity, worships Me dwelling in all beings,—that yogi abides in me, whatever be his mode of life.

## NOTES

1 Sri Madhusoodana points out that here the realisation is that of the identity of the तत्पदार्थ and the तत्पदार्थ in तत्त्वमसि ।

2 Sri Ramanujacharya has to explain this verse as relating to the realisation of God in worship as dwelling in all beings.

3. The fact seems to me that the Lord is describing in these four verses certain planes of realisation attained by the yogi whose concentration intensified by Bhakti and Jnana has begun to bear fruit.

4. सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि- Sri Venkatanatha quotes the verse निश्चैगुण्ये पथि विचरतां को विधिः को निषेधः In this connection Yajnavalkya, Janaka, and Dattatreya are given as instances of the seer who has attained God-vision and is yet in this embodiment as the result of Prârabdha Karma (fructified past action) by way of वाचिदानुवृत्तिः । Yajnavalkya lived in a state of Karma Tyâga, (renunciation of action) and Janaka lived doing Vihita Karma (performance of action).

आत्मोपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन ।

सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः ॥३२॥

He who has a sameness of vision for the bliss and grief of all through a realisation of likeness to his Self, such yogi is regarded as the highest

#### NOTES :

1. There is a lurking feeling in the minds of some commentators that one who regards the joy or grief of others as his own cannot be placed even so



high as one who has visioned God and they are puzzled by the declaration that such a yogi is the highest.

2. It seems to me that the Lord intended this verse to describe a culminating realisation. It describes the yogi who attaining the realisations referred to above is in his periods of *स्युषान* (coming out of *yoga*) full of overflowing divine love for all full of *ahimsa* and confers bliss upon all. The realisation dealt with here is not the attempt to cultivate sympathy towards suffering which is an initial yogic step. But it is the spontaneous out flow of Ananda, Prema and Ahimsa as the result of self-realisation and God realisation through Yoga, Bhakti and Jnana. *यश्चैतन्मुह्यते* ।

3 Sri Ramanujacharya reverses this idea and says the verse refers to the Yogi who is as indifferent to his suffering as to the sorrow that comes to another man.

अर्जुन उवाच—

योऽयं योगस्तथा मोक्षो सामर्थ्येन मयुसुवने ।

एतन्माह न वक्ष्यामि चञ्चलत्वादिस्थितिं स्थिराम् ॥

Arjuna said

This yoga which has been taught by thee,

O, slayer of Madhu, as being of the nature of evenness I do not see its steady existence owing to the restlessness (of the mind.)

### NOTES.

1 सान्य implies balance, evenness, and equanimity as also the realisation of equality and identity

चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्दृढम् ।  
तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्परम् ॥ ३४ ॥

Verily, the mind, O Krishna, is restless impetuous, strong and unyielding. I deem its control as difficult as the control of the wind.

श्रीभगवानुवाच

असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम् ।  
अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥ ३५ ॥

The blessed Lord said :

Without doubt, O mighty-armed, the mind is hard to curb and restless; but it can be curbed by constant practice and by dispassion

### NOTES.

1 क्रमनिग्रह (gradual control) is better and easier than दृढनिग्रह (violent control)



Arjuna asked :

What end does he attain, O Krishna he who is of slack endeavour though endowed with faith and whose mind wanders away from yoga?

Does he, or does he not, fallen from both, perish without support, like a rent cloud, O Mighty-armed, deluded in the path towards Brahman?

Deign, O Krishna, to dispel fully this doubt of mine; for there will never be born one besides Thyself who can dispel this doubt.

#### NOTES.

1 The swerve from yoga (योगचलन) of the yoga-bhīṣṭa may be due to various causes. Sri Madhusoodana says well—आयुषोऽल्पत्वेन मरणकाले चेन्द्रियाणां व्याकुलत्वेन साधनानुष्ठानासंभवात् योगाचलितमानसः । Such fall may be due to the shortness of life and the weakness of the senses at the time of death

2. The question is a natural one What becomes of the yogic aspirant who dies before fulfilled attainment? Who else but God can answer well such a question?

3 The question relates to one who has, in the yoga path, lost कर्माश्रय (support of action) but

has not attained realisation and to the विविदिषासम्भासी (the ascetic who has renounced action out of a desire for knowledge) who is in a like position

श्रीभगवानुवाच —

पार्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते ।

न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिद्गुर्गतिं तात गच्छति ॥ ४० ॥

The Blessed Bhagavan said

Verily O Partha, neither in this world nor in the other world is there destruction for him, for the doer of an auspicious action, O my son, never reaches an evil end.

NOTES.

1 A beautiful Sanskrit stanza says that concentrated Brahmavichara (spiritual research) includes and transcends all other meritorious acts

स्नात तेन समस्तदीनसंक्षिप्ते सर्वापि वृत्तायनि-

र्विज्ञानां च कृतं सहस्रमसिद्धिं देवाश्च संप्रसृजताः ।

सधाराश्च समुद्रता सपितरस्त्रैलोक्यपूज्योऽप्यसौ

यस्य प्रह्लादविचारमे सचमपि स्वैर्यं मनः प्राप्नुयात् ॥

प्राप्य पुण्यकृतार्थलोकानुपित्वा शाश्वतीं समाः ।

शुचीना श्रीमता गेहे योगममोऽभिजायते ॥ ४१ ॥

अथवा योगिनामेव कुले भवति श्रीमताम् ।

यतश्चि पुच्छमतरं लोके जन्म यदीदृशम् ॥ ४२ ॥

Having attained the realms of the doers of righteous actions and having lived there for immemorial years, he who fell from Yoga is reborn in a pure and prosperous home.

Or else he is born into a family of wise yogins; Verily such a birth is very rare to obtain in this world

### NOTES

1 Thus in the case of those who die before going through all the seven yogic *Bhumis* to which I have already referred there are powerful aids to the achievement of perfections in a later birth. The latter state is even higher and rarer than the former

सिलोञ्जवृत्त्या परितुष्टचित्तो धर्मं महान्तं विरजं जुषाण ।  
मय्यर्पितात्मा गृह एव तिष्ठन् नातिप्रसक्तः समुपैति शान्तिम् ॥

तत्र तं बुद्धिसंयोगं लभते पौर्वदैहिकम् ।  
यतते च ततो भूयः संसिद्धौ कुरुनन्दन ॥ ४३ ॥

पूर्वाभ्यासेन तेनैव हियते ह्यवशोऽपि सः ।  
जिज्ञासुरपि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्तते ॥ ४४ ॥

प्रयत्नाद्यतमानस्तु योगी संशुद्धकिल्बिषः ।  
अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥ ४५ ॥

There he recovers union with the faculty of discrimination acquired in his former body, and strives more than before for perfection, O son of the Kurus

By his former practice alone, he is irresistibly impelled. Even the yogic enquirer transcends the world of works

The yogi striving assiduously, cleansed of all taint, gradually gaining perfection through many births, attains the highest goal

### NOTES

1 It was the force of previous yoga that swept Prahlada on its current over paternal obstruction to reach the lotus-feet of God

2 Sri Madhusoodana says well अहम्मादेव योगवासनाभ्यो म्युत्थाप्य मोक्षसाधना-मुद्यः क्रियते ।

3 शब्दप्रज्ञा is interpreted by Sri Ramanuja charya as meaning Prakriti. The stanza is interpreted by him as meaning that the yogi attains the realisation of the Jiva which transcends Prakriti. प्रकृतिश्च पाद्विमुखो देवमनुष्यादिशब्दाभिभाषानर्हं विज्ञानानन्दैकतानमात्र आत्मानं प्राप्नोतीत्यर्थः ।

1 The author of *Gita Vortis* explains Sabda Brahma as meaning the totality of rules of *Vidhi*

and *Nishedha*. Thus according to the Dva school the stanza means that the man of real yoga goes beyond the plane of obligatory action

नपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोऽधिकः  
कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥ ४६ ॥

The Yogi is superior to the ascetics; he superior to the men of shastric study; he superior to the performers of Vedic acts; therefore be thou a Yogi, O Arjuna!

#### NOTES.

1 This verse has caused a flutter in some quarters as a yogi has been exalted here over all others. But the verse marks the culmination of one portion of a synthetic doctrine. The mind disciplined by *सुयुक्तं* becomes fit for Karma Yoga. In Chapters II to V Karma Yoga was belauded and Arjuna was ordered in Chapter III, 5 19<sup>th</sup>, to perform it as it will lead to the Supreme. Chapter VI we are led to the yoga of meditation which is the fruit of Karma Yoga.

2 In this verse Raja Yoga is belauded and Arjuna is asked to perform yoga. How could he fight and do yoga at the same time? This injunction draws his attention to two planes of effort. Later on he is going to be taught *bhakti* and *jna*



are the fruitage of yoga and he is going to be enjoined to practise them. Each higher injunction presupposes a previous lower attainment followed by probation for the higher realisation. It presupposes also that the next lower injunction will not be given up but will be kept up for Lokasangraha.

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्भक्तेनान्तरात्मना ।

अद्यावान् भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मत ॥३७॥

Among all the yogis, he who, with his mind merged in Me and full of faith worships Me, is considered by Me as the highest

#### NOTES

1 Here the Lord has hinted the inner shrine to which the second gate—the gate of Yoga—opens

2 मां—This word is the occasion for a significant prose lyric descriptive of Bhagavan in Sri Ramanujacharya's Bhashya on this verse

3 This verse is the सूत्रात्मिका for the elaborate description of अन्तर्यामि in the next group of six cantos (पदक)

#### (CONCLUSION)

1 This Chapter is mainly devoted to the position of the yoga of meditation (Rāja Yôga)

Sri Madhusoodana thus beautifully sums up the teachings of this Chapter

तदनेनाध्ययिने कर्मयोगस्य बुद्धिशुद्धिहेतोर्मर्यादा दर्शयत्, तत्तथ कृतसर्वकर्मसंन्यासस्य साङ्ग योग विवृण्वता मनोनिग्रहोपाय चाक्षेपनि-  
रासपूर्वमुपदिशता, योगघट्टस्य पुरुषार्थशून्यताशङ्कां च शिथिलयता,  
कर्मकाण्डे त्वंपदार्थनिरूपणं च समापितम्। अतः परं श्रद्धावान्भजते  
यो मामिति सूचितं भक्तियोगं भजनीयं च भगवन्तं वासुदेवं तत्पदार्थ  
निरूपयितुं अग्रिममध्यायपट्कमारभ्यते इति शिवम्।

2 The Gītārtha Sangraha thus sums up this Chapter

योगाभ्यासविधिर्योगी चलधीर्योगसाधनम्।

योगसिद्धिः स्वयोगस्य पारम्यं षष्ठ उच्यते ॥

3 According to Sri Ramānujāchārya this Chapter teaches us the method of yoga which leads us to the realisation of the Atman (Jiva). Such a man of realisation will, then, through Bhakti, reach Narayana.

4. We can well see how this Chapter gives us the truth that the yoga of meditation is the fulfilment of Karma Yoga and is the *Sādhana* (means) of *Bhakti* and *Jnana*

Thus ends the Chapter

ATMASAMYAMA YOGA.

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